

25001/74/2627



Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



Shri Mohan Charan Majhi
Chief Minister, Odisha

SANCTION ORDER HANDOVER CEREMONY of PMGSY-IV Projects in Odisha

Chief Guest

Shri Mohan Charan Majhi

Chief Minister

in august presence of

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Union Minister, Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare,
Rural Development

Shri Rabi Narayan Naik

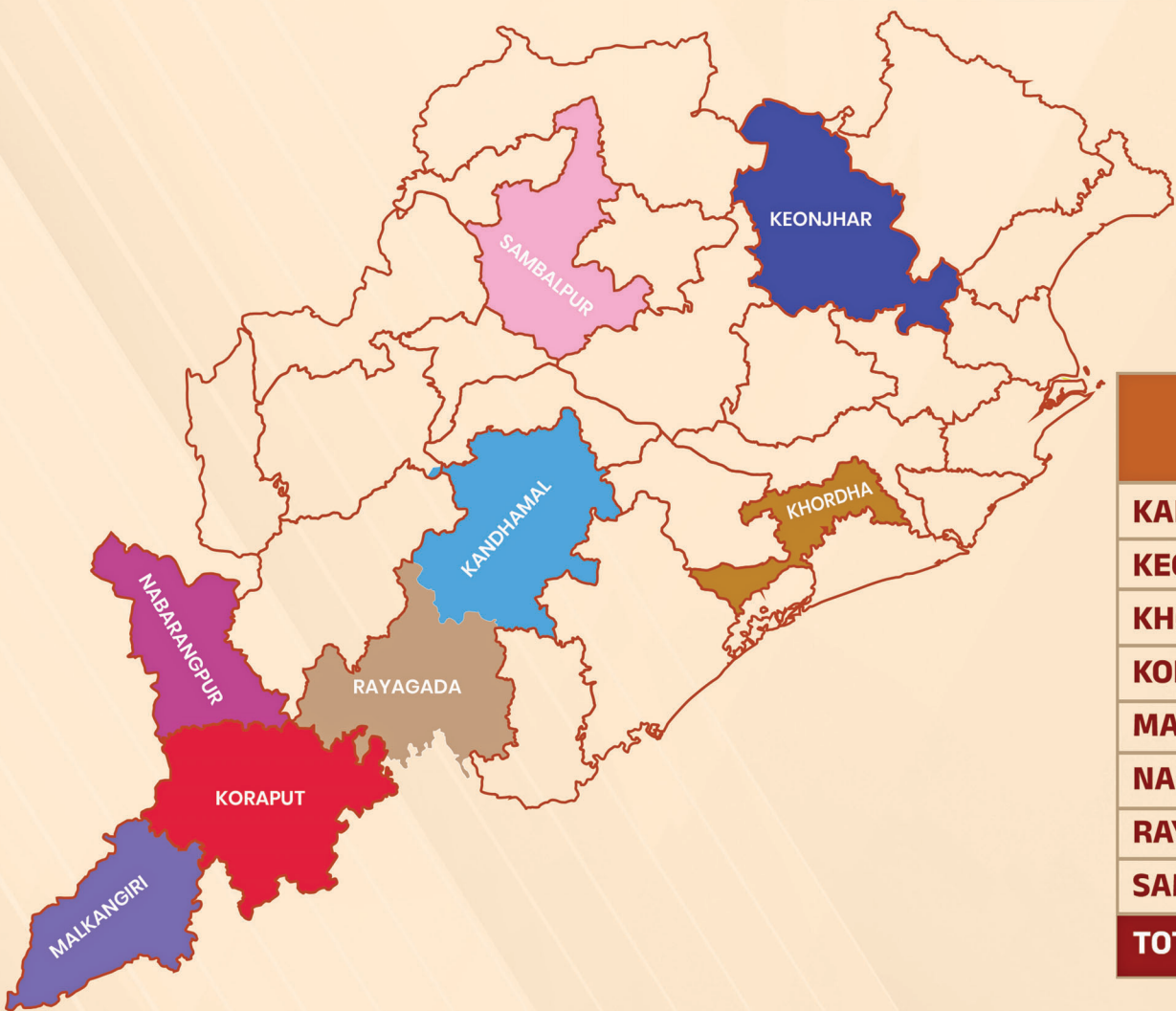
Minister, Rural Development,
Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water, Odisha

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka

MP, Koraput

and All MLAs of Rayagada District

📅 01 MAY 2026 | 📍 RAYAGADA



Districts	No. of roads	Length in km.	Projects' Cost (₹. In Cr)	No. of benefited habitations
KANDHAMAL	153	349.62	339.87	164
KEONJHAR	45	101.99	107.44	47
KHORDHA	7	15.02	14.70	7
KORAPUT	23	32.49	35.87	24
MALKANGIRI	168	281.55	275.27	170
NABARANGPUR	138	324.17	320.19	153
RAYAGADA	274	552.21	562.10	314
SAMBALPUR	19	44.81	42.60	19
TOTAL	827	1701.86	1698.04	898

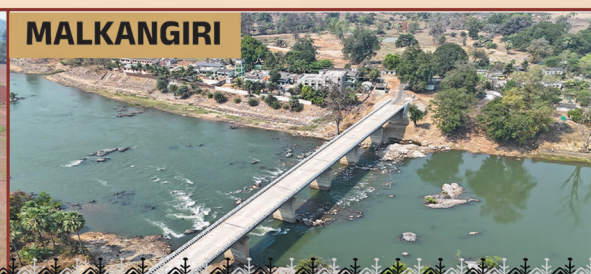
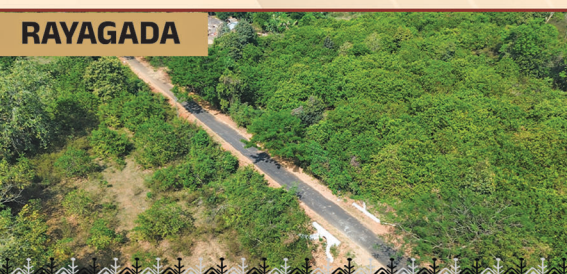
PMGSY-IV: CONNECTING VILLAGES, EMPOWERING ODISHA

Improved Health Services

Educational Growth

Economic Prosperity

Social Development





BILLIE TRUSTS ZODIAC SIGNS

Billie Eilish admitted she once dismissed astrology conversations, but her perspective changed after dating a Gemini man. Noticing how closely he matched typical zodiac traits, she began believing in astrology. Since then, Eilish says she can easily recognise a Gemini personality instantly, without any doubt whatsoever

OLIVIA VALUES LOVE BEYOND ROMANCE

Olivia Rodrigo says she is in the "most important phase" of love, prioritising friendships and community. Recently linked to Cameron Winter after her split from Louis Partridge, she believes dating is secondary, calling it "just the cherry on top" of meaningful relationships in life



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

All eyes may be on you today – for your looks, skills, or even your funky bag! Make hay while the sun shines, and charge your batteries with all that attention. You can get some decent work done with that energy, says Ganesh.

TAURUS

You may have a tendency to feel frustrated when the results are not the way you expected, feels Ganesh. You must still work hard and finish whatever you undertake today. You will discuss some vital issues with a close friend and relive cherished secrets with your life partner.

GEMINI

You will lend your innovative and imaginative spark to your initiatives, which will be quite a few, says Ganesh. Love will bring you immense satisfaction. And you will develop a special bond with your spouse or beloved. You, however, are likely to be dragged into a conflict and will be forced to pick a side.

CANCER

Today, every word coming out of your sweetheart's lips will be music to your ears. Your relationship with your relatives will be harmonious. You may steer clear of your troubles, if you learn to restrain. The best way to deal with criticism is to take them constructively.

LEO

The oath of friendship that you once took as a bunch of raggedy misfits still holds true, and your best buddies are the ones who will stand by your side through hell and high water. Ganesh sees in you the desire to cherish such friends and prove your appreciation by treating them with graceful munificence.

VIRGO

The Scales will balance business and entertainment equally well. The day will be like an endless party, says Ganesh. The emptying of pockets will be proportional to the amount of time you spend doing nothing. But spend prudently, advises Ganesh, and let it not worry you.

LIBRA

Connect and Express – these are the two things you must aim for at work today. You tend to do both things supremely well, be it in a business dialogue on phone, in writing, or in meetings. Getting across to people is not an issue today. But all this work aside, the lingering feeling of wanting to chill out with your sweetheart may become more substantial towards the evening.

SCORPIO

Try adding an entirely new dimension to the way you approach relationships today, advises Ganesh. Being tractable will help iron out the creases in relationships with closed ones. But be wary of complete subjugation, warns Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Confidence-building measures will need to be taken up. Be the herald, and usher in new vigour and confidence in people around you. Your business is set to sky-rocket and a fair share of profits are in the offing, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

Memories of the bygone days will flash through your mind, creating a wave of nostalgia and compelling you to get in touch with old pals. On the other hand, there may be a feeling that your loved ones are demanding more than you can give, says Ganesh. But enjoying some light moments with your beloved in the evening will unburden you and charge you up for the next day.

AQUARIUS

Today will be about pleasure and pain! Plumbing, cleaning, grocery shopping, cooking... you can expect anything to weigh you down. Later, you can relax in a hot soak by candlelight, or unwind with a soothing aromatic massage. Ganesh says you'll be grateful for the pleasures only after the pain.

PISCES

A day filled with socialising awaits you, says Ganesh. You will likely make contact with near and dear ones you haven't met in a while. New associations and friendships could also occur. It is a pleasant and joyous day, so make the most of it.

Neha draws flak for monetising her SocMed presence

Mumbai: Neha Sharma, known for her debut opposite Emraan Hashmi in *Crook*, has landed in a social media controversy after users discovered her paid Instagram subscription service. Charging Rs 299 per month, the actress reportedly has nearly 10,000 subscribers, generating estimated revenue of around Rs 29 lakh.

Subscribers gain access to exclusive content, including photos, behind-the-scenes glimpses and personal updates. Reports suggest the page currently hosts hundreds of locked stories, posts and reels, though the exact nature of the content remains unclear.

The move has sparked a divided reaction online. Some users criticised the model, calling it "OnlyFans Lite," and questioned why an established actress, and daughter of politician Ajit Sharma, would monetise her social media presence this way. Others, however, defended her decision, viewing it as a legitimate digital business strategy driven by audience demand.

Reactions on X ranged from strong disapproval to practical acceptance. While some called the move disappointing, others pointed out the financial logic behind it. Neha has not yet responded publicly to the controversy.

PC's faith essentials

Mumbai: Priyanka Chopra Jonas, also known as PeeCee among her fans, recently gave a glimpse into her everyday essentials, highlighting the spiritual items she carries for protection and comfort. Among them is a small booklet of the Hanuman Chalisa and a traditional 'nazar battu' black thread, both of which she believes shield her from negative energy.

Speaking about the black thread, Priyanka explained that in India it is worn to ward off the evil eye, adding that she prefers layering such protective elements. Holding up the Hanuman Chalisa, she shared that while she may not recite it daily, she turns to it often and feels it protects her, especially during her travels.

Alongside these spiritual keepsakes, Priyanka carries everyday essentials like perfume, hairspray and sunglasses. Her wallet also holds sentimental value, including a cherished photo with her husband, Nick Jonas. She added a relatable detail, revealing she never travels without a stain remover pen after once spilling on her couture outfit.

She also mentioned carrying an EpiPen due to recent allergies and an inhaler for asthma, while her habit of labeling belongings ensures nothing gets misplaced at home.



Don 3: Reason behind Ranveer's exit

Mumbai: Ranveer Singh stepping away from *Don 3*, directed by Farhan Akhtar, has drawn renewed attention. While earlier reports cited general creative differences, fresh details suggest a sharper clash over the film's tone and treatment of the iconic character.

Reportedly, Ranveer pushed for a darker, grittier narrative, advocating for the inclusion of strong language and a more intense portrayal of Don. He believed the character should evolve to reflect current cinematic trends leaning toward violence and realism.

Farhan, however, was not on board with this shift. He is said to have opposed the use of harsh language, preferring to stay true to the essence established by Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan in earlier versions. Determined to preserve that tone, the film-

maker chose not to alter his original vision.

Following the disagreement, Ranveer exited the project in 2025. Reports also mentioned financial implications, with Excel Entertainment seeking compensation for pre-production costs, some of which the actor has reportedly agreed to return.

Meanwhile, Ranveer is riding high on the success of *Dhurandhar: The Revenge*, directed by Aditya Dhar, which continues its strong box office run.



Kritika calls out showbiz hierarchy

Mumbai: Kritika Kamra, currently in the spotlight for her web show *Matka King*, has opened up about the darker realities of her journey in the entertainment industry. In a candid conversation, she revealed having a brief encounter with the casting couch early in her career, adding that she escaped it largely due to luck rather than awareness, as she was very young at the time.

Kritika also spoke about the persistent bias against television actors in Bollywood, describing it as an unspoken hierarchy. Coming from a small town, she initially saw no distinction between TV and films, but later realised how deeply ingrained these perceptions are within the industry.

The actress emphasised that one principle has always guided her choices, portraying strong, independent women on screen. Identifying as a feminist, she shared that she has consciously rejected regressive roles, even if it meant turning down big projects. From avoiding stereotypical TV dramas to refusing film roles with minimal substance, Kritika has remained firm in her approach.

On the work front, the actress is currently seen in the web show *Matka King*, directed by Nagraj Manjule, starring Vijay Varma and Sai Tamhankar. Meanwhile, on the personal front, she got hitched to Gaurav Kapur in an intimate registered marriage ceremony in Mumbai.



PEANUTS



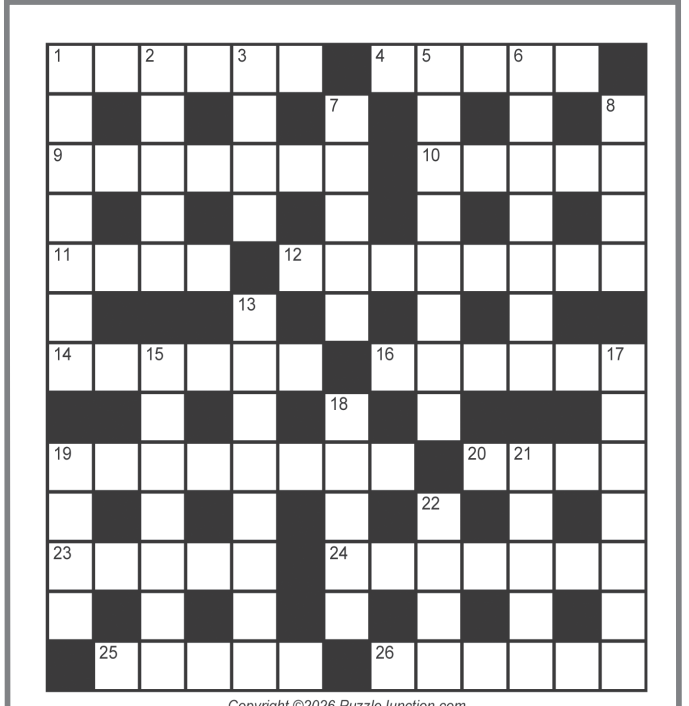
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



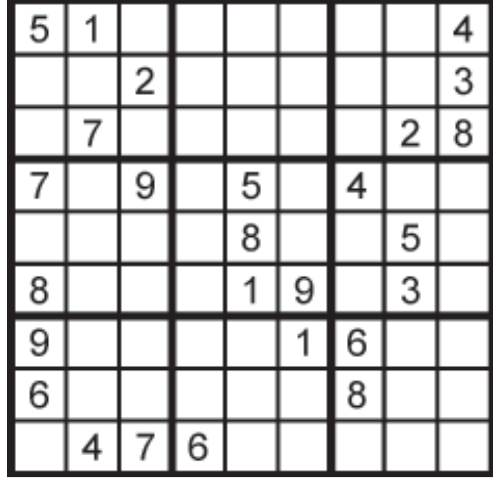
CROSSWORD



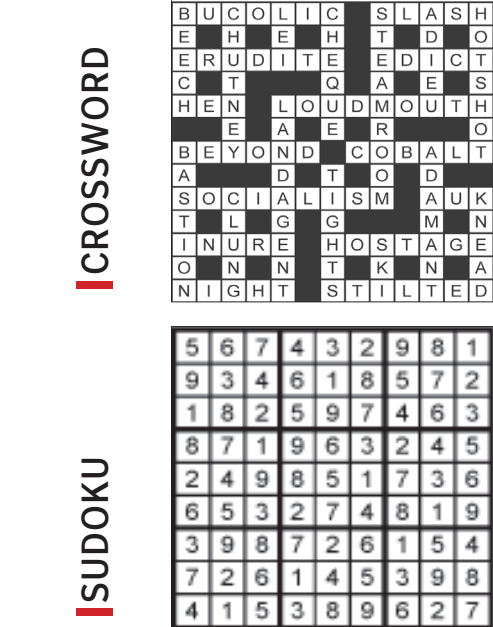
- Across**
- 1 Scream
 - 4 Speech disorders
 - 9 Medieval brass instrument
 - 10 Physically weak
 - 11 Reverberate
 - 12 Intrepid
 - 14 Winter Olympics event
 - 16 White whale
 - 19 It's all in the family
 - 20 Healing sign
 - 23 Side dish
 - 24 Blow up, as a photograph
 - 25 Past its prime
 - 26 Track event
 - 5 Knowledgeable
 - 6 Tableland
 - 7 Computer key
 - 8 In addition
 - 13 Contact sport
 - 15 Nominate
 - 17 Completely enveloping
 - 18 Daisyluke
 - 19 Average
 - 21 Welsh dog
 - 22 Radar signal
- Down**
- 1 Triumph
 - 2 Arrive
 - 3 Door sign

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



PC's essentials
Priyanka shares her daily essentials, highlighting spiritual items she carries for protection and comfort
LEISURE PAGE



Koh-i-Noor
NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani calls for the return of Koh-i-Noor diamond from the UK, just hours before meeting King Charles
INTERNATIONAL | P8



\$1= ₹94.84
Rupee gains 4 paise to settle at 94.84 against US dollar, tracking a correction in global crude prices and a weak greenback overseas
BUSINESS | P9



Parag penalised
RR captain Riyans Parag was fined 25% of his match fee for bringing the game into "disrepute" after being caught vaping on camera
SPORTS | BACK PAGE



FEST AHEAD: A monk cleans an idol of Lord Buddha on the eve of Buddha Purnima, in Agartala, Thursday
PTI PHOTO

CM calls for holistic women empowerment

SPL SESSION OF ASSEMBLY

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 30: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday asserted that real empowerment of women cannot be confined merely to financial independence, but must extend across social, economic, and political spheres to ensure their rightful place in society.

Initiating a debate during the special session of Assembly on the participation of women in Indian democracy, he said women's empowerment has been discussed by political parties for decades, but the concept has often been interpreted in a narrow sense.

Majhi noted that many believe women become empowered simply through self-help groups (SHGs) and limited financial assistance, but termed this understanding inadequate. Emphasising a holistic ap-



proach, Majhi said, "True empowerment lies in enabling women to make decisions for themselves, their families, and society at large. Therefore, empowerment in the social, economic, and political spheres is the true meaning of women's empowerment."

Clarifying the broader purpose of the session, the CM said the discussion was not restricted to 'Nari Shakti Vandana' alone, but was intended to deliberate comprehensively on women's empowerment, particularly political empowerment.

He said although India has made remarkable progress over the 75 years since the Constitution was adopted, half of the

country's population still feels deprived of its rightful position.

The CM said women today are capable of achieving the impossible if provided equal opportunities and a level playing field. Yet, he added, patriarchal social structures continue to create barriers that deny women these opportunities. Targeting Congress over women's reservation in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies, he questioned why the party, despite commanding an overwhelming majority in Parliament in 1984, failed to pass such an important legislation.

Majhi also criticised BJP, stating that while the party frequently claims credit for providing 50 per cent reservation to women in PRIs, it adopts an anti-women stance when reservation in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies is discussed. He said PM Narendra Modi has initiated steps to implement the women's reservation law by the 2029 general elections, while accusing the Opposition of obstructing the move. **P2**

HOLIDAY NOTICE
The offices of Orissa POST will remain closed May 1 (Friday) on account of Labour Day. Therefore, there will be no edition of the paper May 2 (Saturday).
-EDITOR

Over 99% pass ICSE, ISC exams

PTI & PNN

New Delhi, April 30: The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) Thursday declared the Class X and Class XII results for 2026, with overall pass percentages of 99.18 per cent and 99.13 per cent, respectively.

A total of 2,58,721 candidates appeared for the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), or Class X, examination. Altogether 1,03,316 students took the Indian School Certificate (ISC), or Class XII, examination.

Girls outperformed boys in both examinations. In ICSE, girls recorded a pass percentage of 99.46 per cent compared to 98.93 per cent for boys. In ISC, girls achieved a 99.48 per cent pass percentage, while those of boys stood at 98.81 per cent.



Elated students of Stewart School in Bhubaneswar pose for a photo after announcement of the board exam results, Thursday
PIG: BIKASH NAYAK

In the ICSE exam, 2,56,590 candidates qualified, while 2,131 did not clear the exam. In the ISC exam, 1,02,414 candidates qualified, while 902 did not.

Category-wise, in ICSE, general category students recorded a pass percentage of 99.26 per cent, followed by Other Back-

ward Classes (99.24 per cent), Scheduled Tribes (98.07 per cent) and Scheduled Castes (98.76 per cent).

In ISC, general category students registered a 99.17 per cent pass rate. Other Backward Classes 99.12 per cent, Scheduled Castes 98.77 per cent and

In Odisha, 98.17% clear Class X, 99.24% Class XII

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha recorded pass percentages of 98.17 per cent and 99.24 per cent in Class X (ICSE) and Class XII (ISC) examinations, respectively, the results of which were announced by CISCE Thursday. A total of 97 schools in Odisha presented candidates for ICSE examination, while 34 institutions participated in the ISC examination. In Class X exams, 8,948 students – 4,676 boys and 4,272 girls – appeared. The state recorded a pass percentage of 98.17 per cent. For Class XII exams, 1,583 students – 790 boys and 793 girls – appeared. The overall pass percentage stood at 99.24 per cent. Girls outperformed boys in both examinations. **P2**

Scheduled Tribes 98.84 per cent.

The examinations were conducted across 67 subjects in ICSE and 45 subjects in ISC. The results are available on the official CISCE website (cisce.org).

SHORT TAKES

BSE Class X results to be announced May 2

BHUBANESWAR: The results of the Class X examination, conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), will be announced May 2, official sources said Thursday. As per an official notification, the results will be formally declared at 4:00 pm May 2. Students will be able to check their results online (bseodisha.ac.in and bseodisha.nic.in) from 6:00 pm onwards on the same day. Heads of institutions will be able to download the tabulation register from the same websites after 7:00 pm, which will help students appearing for the supplementary examinations in 2026. The annual Class X board examination was conducted at over 3,000 centres across Odisha between February 19 and March 2 this year. More than 5.61 lakh students appeared for the examination.

DEO, BEO among 3 held for sexual harassment

BHUBANESWAR: The Bargarh District Education Officer (DEO), a Block Education Officer (BEO), and a physical education teacher (PET) of a government-run school in the district were arrested on charges of sexually harassing a woman employee of S&ME department, police said Thursday. "DEO Jyoti Kanta Sahu, BEO Surendra Sahu, and Sameer Panigrahi, a PET of a government school in the district, were arrested after a woman employee of S&ME department levelled sexual harassment allegations against them," ASP Siba Prasad Biswal said. The accused were arrested under multiple sections of BNS and Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2023 based on a complaint lodged by Bargarh Deputy Collector Sumati Panda Wednesday, he said. **P5**



IRREGULAR by MANJUL
Defeating BJP in elections is difficult, but defeating them in opinion polls is impossible

1001/32/2627

MESSAGE OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR ON THE OCCASION OF MAY DAY-2026

I convey my greetings and good wishes to all sisters and brothers of the Working Class of the State on the occasion of "May Day".

I call upon everyone to work sincerely in their own spheres and be the reason of pride and glory for the State and contribute to the building of "Viksit Odisha-Viksit Bharat".

(Signature)
(Hari Babu Kambhampati)

ଆନ୍ତର୍ଜାତିକ ଶ୍ରମିକ ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା

ଆନ୍ତର୍ଜାତିକ ଶ୍ରମିକ ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଶ୍ରମିକ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଜଣାଉଛି । ରାଜ୍ୟର ବିକାଶ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ଯୋଗଦାନ ପ୍ରତି ମୁଁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଜଣାଉଛି । ଶ୍ରମିକ ସମାଜର ସର୍ବାଙ୍ଗୀନ ଉନ୍ନତି, କଲ୍ୟାଣ ତଥା ଅଧିକାରର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ପ୍ରତିବଦ୍ଧ ।

ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ଏକ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ଓ ବିକଶିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଠନରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ସମ୍ମିଳିତ ହୋଇ କାମ କରିବା ।

(Signature)
(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

OIPR-1001/1001/2/26-27/0002

City schools shine in ICSE, ISC results

Srijit Haldar of Stewart School, Cuttack tops ICSE in state with 99.5%



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: City schools in Bhubaneswar stood out in the ICSE and ISC 2026 results, delivering outstanding performances with several institutions recording 100% pass rates and producing top scorers across streams.

Loyola School, Bhubaneswar recorded a flawless performance in both examinations. In ICSE, all 198 students passed, with Komal Tripathy and Ronan Slade Toppo jointly topping at 98.4%, followed by Qaseeda Noor (98.2%) and Srishti Roy (97.8%); notably,

(95.30%), while Amit Vikram Pal and Dibyajyoti Das shared third place with 94.80%. Eight students scored above 90%.

In ICSE, the school continued its strong performance, with Shivanshu Mohapatra topping at 98.60%, followed by Hanshika Nayak (97.60%) and Priyanka Priyadarshini (97.20%). A total of 26 students scored above 90%.

Meanwhile, Odisha as a whole recorded impressive results in the examinations conducted by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations. In ICSE (Class X), 8,948 students from 97 schools appeared, achieving a pass percentage of 98.17%. In ISC (Class XII), 1,583 students from 34 schools appeared, registering an outstanding pass percentage of 99.24%. Girls outperformed boys in both examinations, continuing the trend of strong academic performance among female students.

78 students scored above 90%. In ISC, all 51 students cleared the examination, with Adruti Kar leading Science with 96.3%, Shreya Mohanty topping Commerce with 95.3%, and Bidisha Sinha securing the highest in Arts with 97.8%. A total of 18 students scored above 90%, underscoring the school's strong academic performance.

Similarly, Stewart School, Bhubaneswar also recorded a 100% pass rate in ISC, with all 66 students successfully clearing the examination. Ayansh Kumar topped with 95.80%, followed by Sai Anshuman

Rapes, murders 'daily affair' in Odisha: Patnaik

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 30: BJD president Naveen Patnaik Thursday claimed that several countries have advised their women citizens not to visit Odisha as, he alleged, rapes and murders have become a 'daily affair' in the state.

The Leader of the Opposition said this to reporters outside the Assembly after making a statement in the House during a discussion on 'Participation of Women in Indian Democracy'.



Patnaik said, "As you can see, rapes and murders have become a daily affair in the state. Major embassies have told their women citizens not to visit Odisha. Isn't it a terrible shame for our state?"

A number of cases of rape and murder of women were reported in the state last year.

"The Bharatiya Janata Party government is not doing anything for women. It is only doing drama," Patnaik said.

The BJP came to power in the state in June 2024, defeating the BJD, which had governed the state for 24 years.

"The BJP government in the state has no right to speak of women's dignity and empowerment. Governance has been reduced to narratives and optics," Patnaik said earlier in the day while taking part in the discussion in the House during a special session.

Congress also launched a sharp attack on the BJP-led state government. Assembly proceedings were disrupted after Opposition members raised Keonjhar incident.

As CM Mohan Charan Majhi began his address on women's empowerment, Congress

legislators entered the well of the House holding placards and leaflets, shouting slogans against the government.

Responding to the protest, Majhi criticised Congress for disrupting the House, calling such conduct inappropriate.

Unsatisfied, Congress members staged a noisy walkout in protest, though they later returned to participate in the scheduled debate.

The session was convened days after a Constitution Amendment Bill to implement 33 per cent reservation for women in legislatures in 2029 and increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 816 was defeated in the Lower House of Parliament.

Thunderstorms bring relief from heatwave conditions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: Thunderstorms accompanied by rain brought relief from prevailing heatwave conditions across several districts Thursday, even as seven towns continued to record temperatures above 40 degree Celsius.



Waterlogging in Rasulgarn after heavy rain lashed Bhubaneswar, Thursday. PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

Thunderstorms, rain and lightning were reported in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Sundargarh, Angul, Phulbani, Boudh and Rourkela during the afternoon and evening hours, while hailstorms were reported from parts of Bolangir district and Binka area in Sonepur, an IMD official said.

Sonepur recorded 30.2 mm rainfall, followed by Angul (18 mm), Sundargarh (13.8 mm) and Phulbani (10.8 mm).

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said day temperatures are expected to fall by 2 to 3 degree Celsius over the next three days, with no significant change thereafter.

The IMD's Bhubaneswar centre issued an 'orange warning' (be prepared to take action) for Mayurbhanj and Balasore for

Friday, forecasting thunderstorms with lightning, hail and gusty winds.

A yellow warning (be aware) has been issued for Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri, Keonjhar, Nabarangpur, Angul, Dhenkanal, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Kandhamal and Sundergarh districts for Friday.

However, hot and humid weather would prevail in the districts of Bolangir, Kalahandi, Angul, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Boudh, Nuapada, Subarnapur, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khur-

da, Nayagarh, Ganjam and Gajapati Friday, the weather office said.

Similar weather conditions are expected to prevail in the state for another five days, it said.

The IMD advised people to take precautions during thunderstorms, avoid exposure to lightning, seek safe shelter and follow traffic advisories in urban areas. Farmers were also advised to use hail nets to protect crops.

Meanwhile, Bolangir remained the hottest place in the state at 42.2 degree Celsius, followed by Boudh (42), Nuapada (41.6), Titlagarh (41.3), Dhenkanal (40.9), Bhawanipatna (40.6) and Sonepur (40.4).

Min to launch ₹1,698cr road projects in Rayagada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan will visit Odisha May 1, 2026, to launch a major rural road projects worth ₹1,698 crore in Rayagada.



According to reports, the minister will roll out the projects under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-IV). These projects include 827 roads covering about 1,701 km that will provide all-weather roads to 898 villages.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will attend the event, which will be held at IACR Ground in Rayagada. The two leaders will jointly inaugurate the projects and lay foundation stones.

The new roads are expected to improve access to schools, hospitals and markets in rural areas. They are also likely to

boost local trade, create jobs and support overall development in the region.

The programme will also be attended by Rural Development, Panchayat Raj and Drinking Water Minister Rabi Narayan Naik and other officials. Beneficiaries of the scheme will be honoured at the event.

Significantly, under various components of PMGSY, a total of 17,963 roads covering 74,725 km and 707 bridges have so far been sanctioned in the state, while 17,760 roads spanning 71,742 km and 658 bridges have already been completed.

Menstrual hygiene awareness programme held at NCSCDA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: A menstrual hygiene awareness programme under the initiative #PeriodOfPride was held at the National Career Service Centres for Differently Aabled (NCSCDA) campus at Pokhariput here on Thursday. The campaign was jointly organised by India's International Movement to Unite Nations (IIMUN) and the Niyatee Foundation, with support from NCSCDA.



Omm Prakash Swain (Programme Officer), were also present.

Tiwary led an interactive awareness session on menstrual hygiene, addressing myths, safe practices, nutrition, and personal care during menstruation. She encouraged students to view menstruation as a natural biological process and to break the stigma surrounding it. The session allowed students to ask questions freely, making the discussion highly engaging and informative.

A key highlight of the event was the distribution of sanitary napkins to all girl students, ensuring immediate access to essential menstrual hygiene products. The initiative reinforced the message that menstrual health requires both awareness and access to basic resources.

The event was graced by Anurag Tiwary (MBBS, DGO, DNB, FMAS), Associate Consultant at Utkal Hospital, as the chief guest. Other dignitaries included Sonalika Suman, Assistant Director of NCSCDA, and Soumya Ranjan Nayak from IIMUN. Representatives from the Niyatee Foundation, including Sunayani Samartha (Project Head), Binod Kumar Pakal (Centre Manager), and

FASTER, TIME-BOUND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Odisha to launch auto appeal system by May

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 30: In a major administrative reform aimed at strengthening Odisha Right to Public Services Act (ORTPSA), the state government will roll out an Auto Appeal System by May 2026 to ensure faster grievance redressal and timely delivery of public services.

The decision was announced during a review meeting of ORTPSA Nodal Officers from 32 departments, chaired by General Administration and Public Grievance (GA&PG) department Special Secretary Suresh Kumar Vasisth.

Welcoming the officers, Vasisth said State Cabinet has formally approved the Auto Appeal provision under ORTPSA, marking a transformative step in governance.

The system is designed to automatically escalate service requests to higher appellate authorities if the designated officer fails to deliver services within the prescribed timeframe,



removing the need for citizens to manually file appeals.

Describing the initiative as a new benchmark in administrative accountability, Vasisth said the Auto Appeal System would ensure that no citizen is left waiting indefinitely for services guaranteed under the law.

A detailed technical session was conducted by ORTPSA Project Coordinator Pinaki Mohanty, who reviewed the present implementation status across departments and outlined the digital framework of the new system. Mohanty ex-

plained that the integrated platform will automatically trigger appeals whenever deadlines are missed, significantly enhancing transparency and efficiency. The system will also allow real-time tracking of file movement across all 32 departments, strengthening accountability while reducing bureaucratic delays. The digital integration is expected to minimise physical visits to government offices, easing citizen access to services and ensuring a seamless, transparent, and efficient governance process.

Fast-track CSR projects in mining regions: Min

Bhubaneswar: Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari



instructed companies to accelerate implementation of various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives to ensure greater public welfare in coal mining areas. Pujari attended a high-level review meeting on CSR projects at Lok Seva Bhavan here Thursday. He emphasised that industries operating in coal-rich districts have both social and moral responsibilities toward local communities. Districts such as Angul, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, and Sundargarh are key coal mining zones. Major companies including NTPC, OPGC, NLC, and MCL depend on these regions for mining and thermal power generation. In this context, the minister stressed that these companies must actively contribute to the development and well-being of the people living in these areas. Detailed discussions were held regarding ongoing and proposed CSR projects across the four districts. The minister directed companies to ensure funding for a proposed university in Jharsuguda and to expedite land identification so that the project can begin at the earliest. He also called for mobilising funds and initiating projects such as a cardiac care hospital, a stadium in Lakhampur, and other welfare initiatives. Further, instructions were issued to ensure release of pending CSR funds, particularly by MCL. Departmental officials were directed to speed up project execution and ensure proper utilisation of funds.

CLASSIFIED LOST

I, Subhasis Mohapatra, S/o.- Dr. Manmath Kumar Mohapatra have lost the Original ROR (Patta) in the name of my father bearing Khata No.- 347, Plot No.- 458, Mouza- Cuttack Sahar Unit-37 alongwith other documents on dtd.- 07.01.2018 while going to shop for Xerox purpose. If anybody finds the lost documents kindly contact me. Mob-9861061000.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The Joint Trade Union Forum will hold a May Day rally and public meeting in the City Friday to highlight labour issues and workers' rights.

A procession will start at 5pm from Rajmahal Square to Master Canteen Square, followed by a public meeting at 6pm.

Organisers said the event will mark the significance of International Labour Day and press key demands, including withdrawal of new labour codes, an eight-hour workday, a minimum monthly wage of ₹26,000, and stronger social se-

curity for workers. The Forum has urged media, workers, and the public to participate in large numbers.

CITU State Secretary Pradipita Nayak called for collective mobilisation to protect workers' rights. Labour activist Saroj Kumar Barik said May Day remains a global platform for workers to raise concerns and demand reforms.

Labour activist Saroj Kumar Barik said May Day remains a global platform for workers to raise concerns and demand reforms. He stressed the need to bal-

ance technological progress with human welfare, calling for stronger skill development, inclusive policies, and effective enforcement of labour laws.

Barik also raised concerns over unsafe labour migration from Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, and Bihar to industrial hubs such as Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh, citing reports of exploitation, abuse, and human rights violations.

Referring to recent reforms, he noted that India's labour codes, introduced in 2025,

consolidated 29 laws into four codes on wages, industrial relations, social security, and occupational safety. While aimed at simplifying regulations and boosting growth, they have also raised concerns over job security and workers' rights.

Barik also raised concerns over unsafe labour migration from states such as Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, and Bihar to industrial hubs in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh, where reports of exploitation, abuse, and human rights violations continue to emerge.

INT'L LABOUR DAY TODAY

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	95.11 ▲ 0.10	SENSEX	76913.50 ▼ 582.86	GOLD	₹151,024 ▲ ₹1974
EURO	111.60 ▲ 0.23	NIFTY	23997.55 ▼ 180.10	SILVER	₹238,700 ▲ ₹5500

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	37.1°	35.8°	Light to Moderate rain or thunderstorm
Min Temp	24.6°	21.2°	
Humidity	68%	87%	
Rainfall	Nil	2.6mm	

INDIA SLIPS 6 PLACES IN PRESS FREEDOM



PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 30: India slipped six places to rank 157 out of 180 countries in the 2026 World Press Freedom Index, published early Thursday by the French media watchdog Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), also known as Reporters Without Borders.

Last year, India was ranked 151 in the global media independence index. Interestingly, Pakistan, India's nuclear neighbour, is ranked 153, up from 158 last year.

Norway continues to hold the top spot as the best country for journalists for the 10th consecutive year, while Eritrea comes in last for the third year in a row.

However, the biggest improvement in press freedom had been in Syria following the ouster of Bashar al-Assad in late 2024.

While it climbed 36 places in the rankings to 141,

Norway continues to hold the top spot as the best country for journalists for the 10th consecutive year

RSF warned that the press freedom situation there remained "very serious".

The steepest decline in 2026 was in junta-led Niger, which has been placed at 120th, down 37 places.

RSF said, "This year, the Index's analysis highlights an alarming deterioration in the conditions for journalism in many parts of the world, despite some isolated improvements, as 100 out of 180 countries and territories have seen their press freedom score decline."

In India, the RSF said, "Judicial harassment of independent media is intensifying,

driven by the growing use of criminal statutes – defamation and national security laws among them – directly targeting journalists."

The US has been ranked at 64, down from 57 last year, with the RSF saying, "Journalists who were already fighting against economic headwinds and dealing with a crisis of public trust – among other challenges – now also contend with President Donald Trump's systematic weaponisation of state institutions, including funding cuts to public broadcasters such as NPR and PBS, political interference in media ownership, and politically motivated investigations targeting disfavoured journalists and media outlets."

"Since Trump's return to office, journalists have also been targeted on the ground during protests, reflecting a broader deterioration that amounts to one of the most severe crises for press freedom in modern US history," the RSF said.

For the first time in the history of the World Press Freedom Index, the RSF said, over half of the world's countries now fall into the "difficult" or "very serious" categories for press freedom.

In 25 years, the average score of all 180 countries and territories surveyed in the Index has never been so low, it added.



COMMUNICATION BOOST: A Vande Bharat Express crosses Chenab Bridge during a trial run Thursday, as Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw flags off the train service between Jammu and Srinagar. Regular services will commence May 2

Trump floats new plan for Hormuz

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, April 30: US President Donald Trump Thursday floated a new plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a senior official said.

Under the plan, the US would continue its blockade on Iranian ports, while coordinating with allies to impose higher costs on Iran's attempts to subvert the free flow of energy, according to a senior administration official.

Trump is weighing multiple diplomatic and policy options to push Iran to end its chokehold on the waterway, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to comment publicly.

SKELETON SHOCKER

PNN & AGENCIES

Keonjhar, April 30: Three days after media reports and a viral video showed a tribal man from Patana block in Keonjhar carrying his sister's skeleton to a bank as proof of death to withdraw her money, preliminary investigations indicated that bank staffers 'did not cooperate with him', officials said Thursday.

The state government Thursday began the probe into the incident where in Jeetu Munda, 50, was seen carrying the skeletal remains of his sister to Maliposi branch of Odisha

Initial probe reveals bank at fault

Grameen Bank (OGB), causing an uproar across the state as well as the country.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had directed the Northern Division Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC), Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, to initiate a probe.

As part of the investigation, Mohapatra, along with Keonjhar Collector Vishal Singh and other officials, visited the Maliposi branch of OGB Thursday.

Mohapatra checked the CCTV footage and questioned the bank officials to ascertain the circumstances leading to the incident, officials said. The team also vis-



ited Dianali village under the block and questioned Jeetu Munda, who had carried the skeleton of his sister Kalara Munda, 56, to the bank. Mohapatra said preliminary

investigation suggests that the "bank was at fault" and stringent action will be taken against the officials responsible for the entire episode.

"I spoke to the bank officials and Jeetu. Preliminary findings indicate that the bank is at fault. Munda and his sister had visited the bank several times in the past and withdrawn money. Munda is not illiterate, but he is ignorant about the banking procedures," Mohapatra told reporters.

"As there is no audio version of the CCTV footage, we are unable to ascertain what exactly the bank

staff told him. Munda was present in the bank from 11:26am to 11:58am. During this time, he met the bank manager twice and returned aggrieved," the RDC said.

On Tuesday, a day after the incident, the Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) had said the episode appears to have arisen due to a lack of awareness of the claim settlement process, and the individual's unwillingness to accept the procedures explained by the branch manager.

Meanwhile, a Congress delegation led by former OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik met Jeetu earlier in the day.

5 of family killed as car catches fire in Raj



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, April 30: Five members of a family were burnt alive while the driver was seriously injured after a car caught fire on Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Rajasthan's Alwar district, police said Thursday.

The incident took place near Maujpur Wednesday night when the victims were returning from a pilgrimage to Vaishno Devi in Jammu and Kashmir.

The deceased have been identified as Santosh, his wife Shashi, mother Parvati and daughters Raghani and Sakshi, all residents of Chainpura in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Kailash Jindal said a short circuit is suspected to have triggered the blaze. As it was a CNG vehicle, the fire spread fast, leaving the occupants with no time to escape.

"Only skeletal remains were recovered from the vehicle, which have been preserved separately. DNA tests will be conducted to establish their identity," he said.

Amend abortion law for rape survivors: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: A minor cannot be forced to bear a pregnancy, the Supreme Court said Thursday while pulling up the Centre and asking it to amend the law to permit rape survivors to terminate unwanted pregnancies even beyond 20 weeks.

In a ruling with far reaching implications for rape survivors, including children, and the issue of autonomy over their bodies, a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi took strong exception to a plea by AIIMS seeking to set aside the SC order allowing a 15-year-old girl to medically terminate her 30-week pregnancy.

"Please amend your law that when there is pregnancy due to rape etc, then time limitation will not be there. The law needs to be organic and in sync evolving times. Also amend the law so that such trials are completed within a week. Why should the child suffer the pending trauma of the trial also," the CJI said.

The court said in its impassioned observations that this is a case of child rape and the survivor will have a lifelong scar and trauma if termination is not allowed. If the



mother does not have permanent disability, termination should be carried out, it said. "This is a curative petition. Unwanted pregnancy cannot be thrust on a person. Imagine...she is a child. She should be studying now. But we want to make her a mother. Imagine the pain, the humiliation the child has suffered in this," the bench said.

It asked AIIMS to counsel the survivor's parents and said the decision has to be of the person concerned. "There are children for adoption. In this country we have lot of sympathies...There are deserted, abandoned children on the streets and even mafias on it. We have to look at them. This is an unwanted pregnancy of a 15-year-old child," it said.

During the proceedings, an AIIMS doctor told the court that it is not child versus foetus but child versus child.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for AIIMS, mentioned the curative plea and said the termination of

pregnancy is not possible. "It will be a live baby with severe deformities. Minor mother will have lifelong health issues and cannot reproduce... This child can be given for adoption. It has been 30 weeks now. It is a viable life now," Bhati said.

She also sought the court's permission for counselling with the teen and her parents.

At this juncture, Justice Bagchi said, "Who has stopped you? What is your Parents patriae (parent of the nation) approach? Give respect to your citizen. Show data to the parents and if they choose to keep it. Then so be it. But if they think the mental health is in jeopardy then they will take a call. Please do not press your curative. The curative can come from the parents. Let us not make a fight between state and its citizens. Bring in a psychiatrist and counsellor. Let us not choose for people capable for choosing."

It is not for AIIMS, the judge said, to choose for citizens and it can only render medical service.

The top court said the decision on termination has to be that of the survivor and her parents. AIIMS, it said, may help them take an informed decision.

Hezbollah's 'undetectable' fibre-optic drones

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tel Aviv, April 30: Hezbollah has launched a new weapon against northern Israel in the latest round of fighting: small drones controlled with fibre-optic cables, the width of dental floss that avoid electronic detection.

Many drones are susceptible to electronic jamming by air defences. But fibre-optic drones are not controlled remotely. They have a thin cable that connects an operator directly to the drone, making it impossible to jam electronically. However, the drones are not infallible because the wind – or other drones – can cause



the cables to tangle. But, "if you know what you're doing, it's absolutely deadly", said Robert Tollast, a drone expert and researcher at the Royal United Services Institute in London, explaining how the drone can fly low and creep up on a target.

Experts said militaries must either intercept the drones, which is difficult

due to their small size and short flight path, or find a way to snip the nearly invisible cable. Hezbollah – the Iran-backed militant group in Lebanon – has mostly been using the fibre optic drones on Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon or towns on the border. Fiber optic drones are a relatively new threat during the latest round of fighting with Hezbollah. Hezbollah seems to have turned to them because Israeli air defences have been successful against larger and more powerful rockets, missiles and other drones, said the official, who spoke on the

condition of anonymity in line with military guidelines. Ran Kochav, a former head of the Israeli military's air defence command, said Israel is failing in its attempts to defend against the fibre-optic drones. "They fly very low and very fast, and they are very small, it's very difficult to detect them, and even after they're detected, they are really hard to track," he said.

Fibre-optic drones were developed to get around detection, although they do not have the same range as a drone that uses a radio link or artificial intelligence to navigate.

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Hon'ble Union Minister of Home Affairs & Cooperation, Government of India

Date: 1st May 2026 | Time: 09:00 am
Venue: Jive-Tsal, Leh

In the august presence of **Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena**
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Ladakh

Key Events

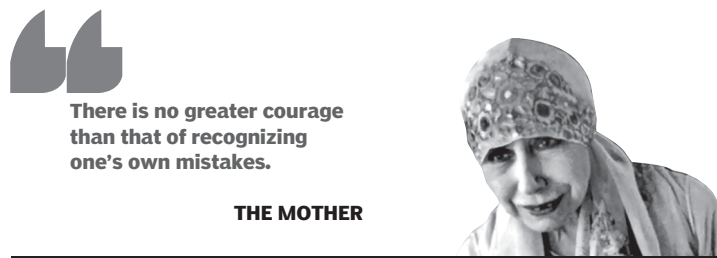
Kushok Bakula Rinpoche Memorial Lecture Series 2 nd May 2026 CIBS, Choglamsar, Leh	Cultural Evening 2 nd May 2026 Leh Market, Leh	Exposition of the Holy Relics in Zanskar 4 th May 2026 Zanskar
Silent Peace Walk 4 th May 2026 Leh Market, Leh	Talk on Modern Science & Buddhist Philosophy 13 th May 2026 CIBS, Choglamsar, Leh	

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There is no greater courage than that of recognizing one's own mistakes.

THE MOTHER

Dirty Money

When John Doe, the anonymous whistleblower behind the Panama Papers, approached us, he handed us an opportunity. When the resulting investigation into the offshore finance industry was published on 3 April, 2016, the world was handed a test. As investigative journalists, we seized the opportunity. Sadly, the world has failed the test.

For decades, Panama, Malta, the British Virgin Islands, and the Cook Islands functioned as safe havens for dictators, strongmen, presidents, kings, mafia clans, money launderers, and tax cheats. Behind layers of shell companies, erected often by shady law firms, they hid fortunes, influence, and crimes. John Doe tore away the veil.

The outrage was immediate and dramatic. US President Barack Obama called for international reforms to address the "huge problem" of tax avoidance. British Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne touted a "hammer blow against those who hide their illegal tax evasion in the dark corners of the financial system."

A slew of investigations were launched. Icelandic Prime Minister Sigmundur Gunnlaugsson resigned over revelations that he owned an undeclared offshore company. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was removed from office and indicted on corruption charges. Governments recovered more than \$1 billion in back taxes and penalties. Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain launched an information-sharing initiative to combat tax evasion and avoidance.

For a moment, it looked as if governments were finally ready to confront a problem they had tolerated for decades. But systemic reform never came. Jurisdictions talked tough but quietly protected the status quo. A decade later, the verdict is damning. The world was warned. Lawmakers blinked. And the system endured.

Tackling the kind of financial crimes exposed by the Panama Papers is not some impossible dream. On the contrary, much could be achieved simply by introducing freely accessible public registers of beneficial ownership. If the public knows exactly who owns each firm, shell companies will not be able to shield those who steal, bribe, launder money, and evade taxes. The same goes for trusts: with many jurisdictions largely or fully exempting them from public disclosure, these "weapons of mass injustice" can hold wealth indefinitely, while obscuring who truly controls it.

Public ownership registers are widely recognised as one of the most effective tools against corruption. But governments largely refuse to implement them. Where they do exist, they are often deliberately weakened, such as by restricting access to them. In British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, public registers remain unfinished or protected by large barriers to access.

In the United States, the Corporate Transparency Act of 2021 was hailed as a breakthrough. But the national ownership register was never made fully accessible to the public, and the relevant authority—the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network—has since exempted many companies from reporting requirements.

The consequences of America's failure to act are particularly severe. While US politicians routinely condemn financial secrecy in distant lands, they ignore the uncomfortable truth: when it comes to hiding dirty money, Delaware and Nevada are not much better than Panama. Then-Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen acknowledged as much in 2021: "There's a good argument that, right now, the best place to hide and launder ill-gotten gains is actually the United States." (Europe is also high on the list.)

Illicit gains are often channelled through the property sector. Global Financial Integrity reports that, in 2015–20, more than \$2.3 billion was laundered through US real estate. America's own authorities have warned that opaque ownership structures have enabled sanctioned Russian elites to invest in US property. Entire neighborhoods of luxury housing are effectively anonymously owned.

US President Donald Trump's administration appears particularly unlikely to act against hidden wealth, even though this would be one of the most powerful weapons against America's adversaries. Drug cartels, sanctioned oligarchs, extremist networks, and kleptocratic regimes rely less on troops and drones than on clever accountants, shell companies, and real-estate registries. But Trump would rather deploy warships, authorize airstrikes, and threaten to obliterate civilizations than dismantle this infrastructure.

Hidden wealth fuels corruption, distorts markets, drives inequality, finances authoritarian regimes, and weakens democracies. It bankrolls disinformation, environmental destruction, and war. It endures not because it is inevitable, but because powerful interests benefit from it. None of the measures recommended here is technically difficult or even economically damaging. They are just politically inconvenient—and, in many cases, financially detrimental for those in power. After all, from Washington to Moscow to Berlin, political power is often concentrated in the hands of the ultra-wealthy.

The revelations contained in the Panama Papers were shocking. But the response has exposed something even more troubling: how determined governments are to protect the system of offshore wealth that causes such far-reaching harm to our societies and economies. Lawmakers cannot credibly claim to oppose authoritarianism and corruption unless they act to dismantle these financial crime havens.

Frederik Obermaier, a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist, is Co-Founder and Co-Director of the investigative newsroom Paper Trail Media. Bastian Obermayer is a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Frederik Obermaier & Bastian Obermayer

Hidden wealth fuels corruption, distorts markets, drives inequality, finances authoritarian regimes, and weakens democracies. It bankrolls disinformation, environmental destruction, and war. It endures not because it is inevitable, but because powerful interests benefit from it



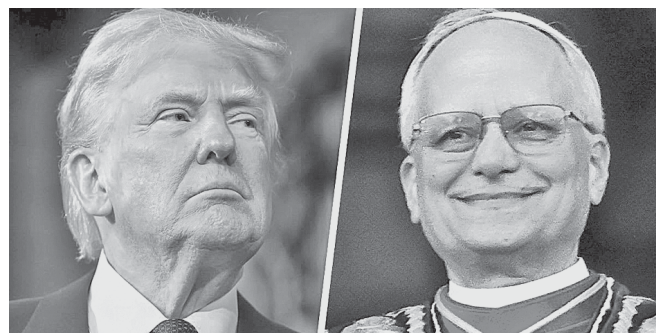
Anwesh Satpathy

THE "JUST WAR" DOCTRINE DOES NOT NECESSARILY SEE A JUST WAR AS ETHICAL IN THE STRICTEST SENSE OF THE TERM

The temporal and the spiritual are now clashing. Donald Trump is the first President of the United States to have openly and explicitly declared the occupant of St. Peter's chair to be "weak on crime," and worse, that he supports Iran's right to have nuclear weapons. This is a plain lie that flies in the face of the Vatican's consistent opposition to the use of nuclear weapons. In fact, Pope Pius XII had warned of the evil potential of atomic energy years before the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. In recent years, Pope Francis had reiterated the Church's opposition by denouncing mere possession of the weapons as immoral. Pope Leo XIV has similarly continued the Church's opposition by critiquing the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction as deterrence and calling for complete disarmament.

US Vice-President JD Vance, who claims to be a catholic, asked the Pope to essentially shut his mouth on matters of American foreign policy while insinuating that the Pope was ignorant of the Augustinian "Just war" doctrine. This is quite presumptuous and simply ridiculous given that Leo is the first Augustinian Pope. The debate was started by Trump who asserted that he had God's blessing for the war against Iran. Leo responded, albeit indirectly but clearly, by calling out "delusions of omnipotence" justifying the war, adding that "God does not bless any conflict." The "Just war" doctrine does not necessarily see a just war as ethical in the strictest sense of the term. A just war may be necessary in a world that is fallen, to a people who are expelled from the Garden of Eden, but it is never ideal.

Can the Iran War be justified based on the criteria of "Just war" in the catechism?



It is difficult to argue what "success" even means given that US has repeatedly shifted the goal post ever since it attacked Iran "preventively"

The first is the criteria of the "just cause." The war must only be fought when there has been grave damage inflicted on the defending party. As the catechism puts it, "the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain." War is thus justified on the basis of being a response to aggression and only on the conditions that all peace efforts have failed (second criteria). One must understand the distinction between pre-emptive and preventive war to make sense of the just cause. In a pre-emptive war, the first country attacks the second on the basis that it has trustworthy information that the second country is going to attack it. Most ethicists agree that at the very least one can make a legitimate case for pre-emptive war. If a country is preparing to commit a large-scale invasion and the only way of stopping such an attack is to strike first and thus ensure less people suffer than need be, then a pre-emptive war can technically be seen as morally legitimate and perhaps even as self-defence. A preventive war, on the other hand, is premised upon the idea that Country B would pose a threat to Coun-

try A at some point in the future when it strengthens its military capability. In this scenario, Country B is not preparing for an attack and there are no indications that it poses an immediate threat to Country A. A war of this nature, as the Catholic traditionalist philosopher Ed Feser has argued, is not morally defensible. US war on Iran is preventive, not pre-emptive. It is premised upon the idea that Iran is going to drop nukes on US and Israel at some point in the future when they manage to acquire it. The plausibility of the assertion is irrelevant to its moral legitimacy based on Catholic doctrine.

The fulfilment of the second criteria is similarly, at the very least, questionable. Iran was negotiating with US even as US-Israel launched a surprise attack on Iran's Supreme Leader. Both in February and in June, talks were in progress as Iran was attacked. Just a day before Operation Epic Fury, Oman's foreign minister (who was the mediator) announced that Iran had agreed to give up its enriched uranium, which was precisely the stated demand.

The third criteria concern the prospects of success. It is difficult to argue what "suc-

cess" even means given that US has repeatedly shifted the goal post ever since it attacked Iran "preventively". The Supreme Leader was killed on the pretext of regime change and "saving" the Iranian people from the tyranny of the theocratic regime. When regime change did not happen, the US shifted its goal post again to stopping Iran's nuclear programme.

The fourth criteria, that the "use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated," is the one that has been most gravely violated. Catholic theology permits only the accidental harm to civilians on the condition of proportionality and moral certitude. The US bombing of the Minab elementary school that left around 156 dead, most of whom were schoolgirls, is an unambiguous war crime. The war has left the whole region unstable. Economic consequences include the fact that 45 million people in Africa face acute hunger as a result of the war (WHO). There will be long term health consequences including the risk of cancer owing to the bombings. This is in addition to the fact that at least 6,000 civilians have died in the Middle East as a result of this war.

The Pope is merely reiterating traditional Catholic teaching and helping restore perception of the Vatican as a moral authority worth paying attention to. The President, on the other hand, is destroying any semblance of moral legitimacy the US may have had once upon a time. The distinction that Vance makes between morality and realpolitik is not a distinction that the Church has ever recognized.

The writer is a columnist with a background in Global Affairs from Kings College London.

SPECTRUM MAY DAY

Workers over billionaires



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

REAL WAGE GROWTH FOR MANY CATEGORIES OF WORKERS HAS REMAINED SLUGGISH, ESPECIALLY WHEN ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION

International Labour Day, also known as Workers' Day or May Day, is observed worldwide to honour the contributions and rights of workers across all sectors—manual, skilled, and professional. The day underscores the importance of fair wages, safe working conditions, and constructive dialogue between workers and employers.

For May Day 2026, the slogan "Workers Over Billionaires" has emerged as a defining call of our times. It is a labour-focused rallying cry, particularly championed by the May Day Strong Network and Democratic Socialists on May Day 2026, aimed at combating wealth inequality and corporate influence. Popularized in global political discourse by leaders such as Bernie Sanders, it encapsulates a fundamental debate in political economy: should economic systems prioritise wealth accumulation for a few, or dignity and security for the many?

In India, this slogan has gained renewed relevance amid rising inequality, unemployment, and concerns

over labour law reforms. While labour suffers from decline of real wages and retrenchment, corporations amass wealth. Despite progress, Indian workers continue to face serious challenges: a large informal sector with little job security, low wages and irregular employment, inadequate social security, and emerging concerns in the gig and digital economy.

According to a report by the Foundation for Economic Development, India's minimum wage structure may be excluding a majority of workers from formal employment, with 64% of workers earning below the legal wage floor. The share of Indian workers with no contract, no Provident Fund, no legal protection is higher than in Vietnam, Thailand, Bangladesh, or Mexico.

The pressures of a 24x7 work culture are no longer limited to stress or burnout—they now carry serious human costs. In recent years, India has witnessed cases of employees, particularly in high-pressure sectors like IT, dying by suicide after prolonged overwork, unrealistic targets, and

constant digital surveillance. The new Labour Codes implemented despite the strong opposition from working class is likely to make hire and fire easy and curb the right to protest against injustice.

Data from the International Labour Organization and the Periodic Labour Force Survey show that nearly 85–90% of India's workforce is in the informal sector. These workers lack written contracts, paid leave, health insurance, or retirement benefits. Even among regular salaried workers, a significant proportion does not have formal job security or social protection. Real wage growth for many categories of workers has remained sluggish, especially when adjusted for inflation.

The issue of wage disparity becomes clearer when productivity is compared with earnings. While corporate profits—especially in sectors like finance, technology, and infrastructure—have risen sharply, wages as a share of GDP have not kept pace. This indicates that a larger portion of economic gains is being captured by capital rather

than labour.

While corporates are given benefits such as corporate tax cut and loan writeoffs, workers are impoverished through excessive GST and excise taxes on petroleum products. Corporate profits in India have nearly triple since the pandemic, reaching Rs 7.1 lakh crore in 2024-25 with profit-to-GDP ratio reaching a 17-year high of 4.7%.

Rebalancing this system requires evidence-based policy choices—strengthening labour rights, ensuring living wages, expanding social security, and implementing a more progressive taxation system. In reality, the true spirit of May Day in India will be realized when all workers, including those in the informal sector, receive social protection and fair wages and safe working environments are ensured; when women workers are given equal opportunities and pay; and when economic growth is aligned with human dignity and equity.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

WISDOM CORNER

He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper.

EDMUND BURKE

Joy can only be real if people look upon their life as a service and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness.

LEO TOLSTOY

Two roads diverged in a wood and I - I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.

ROBERT FROST

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Unbearable summer

Sir, According to a recent report, 95 of the 100 hottest cities in the world are located in India. India is witnessing unprecedented hot days of summer and people and animals are reeling under scorching heat. Year by year, temperature rises during summer season and the unbearable weather condition brings normal life to a standstill. Severe heat is mainly caused by heat absorbing materials used in concrete buildings and asphalt used in the construction of roads. Modernisation and urbanisation have enormous impact on the lives of people. Skyscrapers and huge concrete structures exacerbate severe heat conditions. While buildings are necessary for living, construction of buildings disregarding environmental conservation will put our life in peril. Environment friendly materials must be used for construction. Destroying water bodies and green coverage will also lead to rise in temperature. European countries always follow environmental rules in construction of buildings. If we expand concrete jungle in urban areas, severe heat in summer season won't subside. We must have a vision of futurity and our lifestyles must help us live a happy and comfortable life.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Trade & cooperation

Sir, The India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement is a major step to boost trade and cooperation. First, both countries will reduce or remove taxes on about 8,000 products, making goods cheaper. New Zealand plans to invest around \$20 billion in India, creating jobs and growth. Indian products like handlooms, handicrafts, and spices will get better access to the New Zealand market, helping small businesses. At the same time, limits are kept on dairy, sugar, and spices to protect Indian farmers. Some items like New Zealand wines and kiwi products will become more affordable. The deal also makes travel and work easier. About 5,000 visas each year will be given to Indian professionals in IT, healthcare, and engineering for up to three years. Students can work 20 hours per week. Overall, the agreement will increase trade, create jobs, and benefit India's middle class.

RS Narula, PATIALA

MAN AWARDED LIFE TERM FOR MURDER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, April 30: A local court Thursday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for the 2024 murder of an acquaintance following a financial dispute at Paralasingha village under Kesinga police limits in Kalahandi district.

District and Sessions Judge Anup Ranjan Pattnaik found Jitu Gouda guilty of murdering Biranchi Naik. In addition to the life sentence, the court imposed a fine of ₹50,000 on the convict. Failure to pay the fine will result in an additional six months of imprisonment, the judge ordered.

The conviction was based on the testimonies of 12 witnesses and 22 pieces of evidence presented by the prosecution, Public Prosecutor Manoj Kumar Meher said.

Meher said Naik left his home May 12, 2024, to meet Gouda but never returned. His body was found the following day near Mashanibandh under Narla police limits.

During the investigation, police detained Gouda on suspicion of involvement. Authorities said he later confessed and admitted that he tied Naik's hands and feet before slitting his throat with a knife.

Police said the murder was due to a dispute over money. Gouda allegedly told investigators that he had earlier paid Naik ₹10,000 for a promised job. The conflict escalated when Naik allegedly demanded an additional ₹15,000, leading to the fatal attack by Gouda.



2 OES officers, PET held over sexual harassment

Financial irregularities also crop up during probe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, April 30: Two Odisha Education Service (OES) officers and a physical education teacher of a government-run school in Bargarh district were arrested on the charge of sexually harassing a woman employee of the School and Mass Education department abusing their authority, police said Thursday, adding that they also engaged in committing financial irregularities.

The accused, identified as District Education Officer (DEO) Jyotikanta Sahu, 45, of Khajurtikra in Ward No-8 of Bargarh municipality, Block Education Officer (BEO) Surendra Kumar Sahu, 45, native of Kanakora village under Rengali police limits in Jharsuguda district, and Samir Kumar Panigrahi, 51, PET of Satalma High School and a resident of Bishipali under Barpali police limits in Bargarh district, were arrested after a departmental inquiry found veracity in the sexual harassment allegation levelled by the victim.

Three mobile phones and



BEO SURENDRA KUMAR SAHU



DEO JYOTIKANTA SAHU



PET SAMEER KUMAR PANIGRAHI

documents related to the case were seized from their possession. A case (229/26) was registered at Bargarh Town police station based on a complaint filed by Deputy Collector Sumati Panda. The three accused were later produced in a local court and remanded to judicial custody of district jail after their bail pleas got rejected.

According to officials, allegations of sexual harassment and misuse of power against the trio were earlier reported to District Collector Aditya Goyal. Acting on his direction, a committee headed by Deputy Collector Panda was formed to investigate the matter.

The inquiry confirmed the allegations, following which Panda lodged a formal complaint at the Town police station Wednesday. Police summoned the accused for questioning and arrested them after

obtaining evidence supporting the charges, officials said.

The probe found out that the BEO, with the knowledge of the DEO, allegedly sexually harassed multiple woman employees at the workplace, while PET Panigrahi was found involved in financial irregularities.

Collector Goyal said complaints had been received a few days ago against some officials of the district education department. An inquiry was conducted and based on the report, a complaint was filed with the police. The police have taken criminal action, and the district administration will also initiate action against those arrested, he said.

As the investigation is underway, several details have been kept confidential. Action will be taken against anyone found involved, Goyal added.

Woman killed, 2 injured after soil mound caves in

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur, April 30: A woman was killed and two others were injured after a mound of soil collapsed over them while they were collecting clay for house plastering near a canal in Koraput district, officials said Thursday.

The incident occurred around noon near the Ganga nullah embankment at Niladoraput village under Hikimpur panchayat in Nandapur block.



The deceased was identified as Gupteshwari Mali, 21, wife of Pushpa Mali, a resident of Katlaput village. Her sister-in-law Malati Khil, 28, and niece Kanchan Chhodiya, 13, of Kamarbelgaon village sustained minor injuries and were admitted to the Nandapur Community Health Centre.

The incident occurred Thursday when Gupteshwari was returning home with her husband and their 3-year-old differently abled son after visiting her pa-

rental home at Kamarbelgaon village. On their way back, she, along with relatives, stopped near the canal to collect red clay used for plastering houses.

Leaving the child with her husband and brother, she went towards the canal bank with Malati, Jayanti Nayak, Kanchan Chhodiya and others to collect soil. Suddenly, a portion of the embankment caved in, burying three of them under the debris.

Malati and Kanchan managed to escape with minor injuries and raised an alarm. Family members and locals rushed to the spot, removed the soil and rescued Gupteshwari. She was taken to the Nandapur Community Health Centre, where doctors pronounced her dead.

Nandapur police registered a case (11/2026) and launched an investigation over a complaint filed by her husband. Nandapur IIC Trinath Totapadia confirmed that a case was registered and ASI Gupteswar Goud was leading the investigation.

Malibelgaon sarpanch Prabhalla Muduli and residents requested financial assistance for the survivors as the family is very poor.

Nandapur tehsildar Debabrata Moharana stated that the District Collector has been briefed on the incident.

This incident follows a similar tragedy three years ago at the same location, where a soil collapse killed two women and seriously injured two others.

Tusker electrocuted

Bolangir: A tusker was reportedly electrocuted after coming into contact with a live wire in a cashew orchard at Chanutamal village under Muribahal forest range in Bolangir district Thursday. A team from the Forest department rushed to the spot after



being alerted and launched an investigation. Preliminary findings indicate that the elephant may have come into contact with a live electric line leading to its death. However, officials said all angles, including accidental and other possible causes, are being examined. The carcass of the animal, estimated to be 10-12 years old, was first spotted by farmer Narayan Patel, who informed authorities. DFO Ajit Bishi, ACF Murari Panda and RCCF Santosh Joshi visited the site and reviewed the situation. Officials said the tusks were intact and have been secured. A team of veterinarians have conducted the post-mortem and the exact cause of death will be confirmed after the report is received, forest officials said. The incident has raised concerns as elephant deaths have reportedly increased in the region in recent years.

LABOURER DIES OF SUNSTROKE IN SUNDARGARH

Bargaon: A 47-year-old man from Birshu village under this police limits in Sundargarh district allegedly died of sunstroke Thursday, police said. The deceased was identified as Sambu Majhi. Police registered a case of unnatural death and launched an investigation. According to reports, Majhi was working as a labourer at a house in Budna village. He suddenly fell ill and collapsed around 10:30am while doing masonry work under intense heat. He was rushed to the Bargaon hospital and later referred to the Rourkela Government Hospital as his condition deteriorated. However, he succumbed on the way, officials said. His family has lodged a complaint with the police. The body will be sent for post-mortem examination Friday, family members said.

3 bankers among 4 convicted for fraud, sentenced to 3-year RI

Baripada: The Special Judge, Vigilance Court in Baripada Thursday found four individuals, including three employees of an urban cooperative bank, guilty of committing bank loan fraud and sentenced them to undergo three years of rigorous imprisonment (RI). "Asutosh Mohanty, Former Branch Manager (disengaged), Baripada Urban Co-operative Bank Limited, Rairangpur Branch, Kantilal Mugree, Former Chief Executive (Retired), Baripada Urban Co-operative Bank Limited, Baripada and Salil Agarwal (Loanee) from Rairangpur in Mayurbhanj district, who were charge sheeted by Odisha Vigilance in a case U/S 13(2)(r/w 13(1)(c)(d) of PC Act 1988/418/420/120-B IPC for misappropriation of government money over ₹15.58 lakh in connection with a loan fraud case, were convicted by Special Judge, Vigilance, Baripada," the Vigilance wing of state police said in a statement.

The three accused bank officials had favoured the loanee Agarwal and disbursed the loan amount in his favour on the basis of fabricated documents and inadequate security, violating the conditions of the loan policy of the bank, it further said.

The court sentenced each convict to undergo rigorous imprisonment for a period of three years and imposed ₹30,000 fine on each of them. Odisha Vigilance will now move the competent authority for stoppage of pension of the convict, Kantilal Mugree, following his conviction, the anti-corruption wing said.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BHAWANIPATNA DIST-KALAHANDI, PIN-766001

'e' Procurement NOTICE

Bid Identification No. BPM /03/2026-27
Bid Identification No. BPM /1612, dt 29/04/2026

No.13001/337/2627: The Executive Officer on behalf of Bhawanipatna Municipality invites tenders in double Cover System. Bid documents consisting of specification the Schedule of Quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen the Govt. Website i.e. <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

- Number of Civil works : 01 (One) numbers
- Estimated Costs : 2.09 Crore
- Period of completion : As per NIT
- Date and time of availability of the bid documents in the portal : From 02.00 P.M. of 29.04.2026 to 11.00 AM of 13.05.2026
- Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal : 11.00 AM of 13.05.2026
- Bids will be opened on : 11.30 AM of Dt. 13.05.2026
- Name and address of the officer inviting bid : Executive Officer, Bhawanipatna Municipality

Sd./- Executive Officer
Bhawanipatna Municipality

OIPR-13001/13100/1/26-27/0005

OFFICE OF THE ROURKELA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Uditnagar, Rourkela, Dist.: Sundargarh (Odisha), PIN - 769012
Website: www.rmc.nic.in, Email Id: rourkelamunicipality@gmail.com
No. 5378 Date: 28.04.26

TENDER CALL NOTICE

No. 13001/332/2627: The Municipal Commissioner on behalf of Rourkela Municipal Corporation invites sealed applications in conformation with Detailed Tender Call Notice from the reputed firms/agencies for "Construction of Rustic Wooden Picnic Spot Entrance Gate at Balughat".

Detail technical specifications, along with terms & conditions etc. may be seen from the website of Rourkela Municipal Corporation i.e. www.rmc.nic.in & www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Date of issue of tender document 29.04.2026.

Sd./- Commissioner
Rourkela Municipal Corporation

OIPR-13001/13131/1/26-27/0019

EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/26-27
E-Tender/10, Dt. 27.04.2026

(1) Tender No. : etender/Soutkur-26-2026, dtd. 16.04.2026

Description: NEW WORKS, ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING RS. 5,00,000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION ICHHAPURAM (IPM) (EX) TO ICHHAPURAM (IPM) (IN) UNDER SR. SECTION ENGINEER (SSE) (W)/BRAHMAPUR (BAM) FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30/06/2027.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 99.13 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2,46,200.00

(2) Tender No. : etender/Soutkur-27-2026, dtd. 16.04.2026

Description: NEW WORKS, ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING RS. 5,00,000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION ICHHAPURAM (IPM) (EX) TO PALASA (PSA) UNDER SR. SECTION ENGINEER (SSE) (W)/PALASA (PSA) FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30/06/2027.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 123.08 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2,46,200.00

(3) Tender No. : e-Tender-HQKUR-24-2026, dtd. 16.04.2026

Description: PROPOSED TEMPORARY SHED AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH CAR FESTIVAL 2026 AT PURI.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 426.01 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 8,52,000.00

(4) Tender No. : eTender-hq-kur-25-2026, dtd. 17.04.2026

Description: PROPOSED REPAIRS TO ROAD FROM ASHRAM CHOWK TO GHODA BAZAR CHOWK AND UP TO RAM MANDIR AT PURI UNDER ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (ADEN)/TRACK/KHURDA ROAD (KUR).

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 220.85 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 4,41,700.00

(5) Tender No. : eTender-hq-kur-28-2026, dtd. 16.04.2026

Description: MAJOR UP-GRADATION OF KHURDA ROAD STATION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 2923.35 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 58,46,700.00

Completion period : 12 (Twelve) Months (for sl. no. 1, 2 & 5) and 02 (Two) Months (for sl. no. 3 & 4)

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1500 hrs. of 08.05.2026 (for all tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website ten days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg),
PR-97/R/26-27 Khurda Road

NOTIFICATION

This is to inform all concern that Environmental Clearance has been granted by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Issued by the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), ODISHA) vide their EC Identification No. EC25C3801OR5906052N, date-08.04.2026 for Residential Cum Commercial (Shopping Center), Block-A(S+5) Storied Residential Apartment Building (MIG), Block-B (B+S+4) storied Shopping Center & Proposed Block-C (B+S+5) Storied Residential Apartment Building (MIG) Over a Plot Area of 7570 Sq.mt. / 0.757 Ha with Total Built up Area of 26,980.70 Sqmt, located in Mouza- Rudrapur, Tahasil- Bhubaneswar, District- Khordha of M/s. Om Swastik.

Sd/- Managing Partner
Om Swastik, Bhubaneswar

Expression of Interest for Development of Green cover patches in Railway station approaches

Chakradharpur Division of South Eastern Railway invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from Individuals, NGO's, Trusts, Charitable Institutions, Corporates, Government Bodies and Self-help groups for the Development of Green cover patches in Railway Station approaches for beautification of Railway area/premises. Policy guidelines on beautification of Railway area/premises shall be applicable as per Railway Board's letter no. 2022/LML-II/15/1; dated 23.09.2022. MOU shall also govern as per this guideline. [Link:https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/uploads/directorateland_amen/downloads/2022/Revised-Policy-Guidlines-280922.pdf]. The Applicant shall submit the general information about them in the prescribed formats enclosed along with this EOI as per format Annexure - A for different stations as detailed below. It is desirable that Applicants submit the photos, details of similar works executed by them, if any along with this EOI. **Sl.No.;** EOI No. as per Annexure - A & Station are as follows: 1; EOI No. CKP-ENGG-EOI-WEST-BEAUTIFICATION-26-27-05 & Rourkela & Jharsuguda. 2; EOI No. CKP-ENGG-EOI-EAST-BEAUTIFICATION-26-27-05 & Tatanagar. 3; EOI No. CKP-ENGG-EOI-SOUTH-BEAUTIFICATION-26-27-05 & Chaibasa. **Closing Date:** 25.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs. (for Sl.No. 1 to 3 each). **Opening date:** 25.05.2026 at 15.30 hrs. (for Sl.No. 1 to 3 each). For any query/details, parties may contact Office of the Sr. Divisional Engineer (Co-ord)/Chakradharpur of Chakradharpur Division during working hours. The EOI in a sealed envelope along with details as per Annexure A, which is available in link mentioned below with any other suggestions, if any to be reached within **25.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs.** in the office of Sr. Divisional Engineer/Co-Ord/Chakradharpur and opened on **25.05.2026 at 15.30 Hrs.**, Engineering Department, DRM Office Complex, At/Post - Chakradharpur, Dist -West Singhbhum, Pin-833102 Jharkhand. **M.No -9771467081, 7319936830**, Email Id-tender.cpk@gmail.com. All the intended agencies/parties are requested to visit the site location before submission of EOI. Detail EOI notifications are uploaded in [<https://ser.indianrailways.gov.in/>→ Divisions→Chakradharpur→NOTIFICATIONS→EOI CKP DIVISION 03 SEC 5TH CALL].

(PR-100) Divisional Railway Manager/Engg, Chakradharpur

South Eastern Railway
We serve with a smile

EAST COAST RAILWAY

APPOINTMENT OF 77 ATVM FACILITATORS AT 19 STATIONS OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION

No. : SDCM/KUR/ATVM Facilitator/2026 Date : 23.04.2026

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM INTERESTED RETIRED RAILWAY EMPLOYEES & GENERAL PUBLIC TO SELL TICKETS @ 3% BONUS BASIS AS ATVM FACILITATOR FOR TWO YEARS.

Sl No	Station Name	No. of ATVM	Sl No	Station Name	No. of ATVM
1	Bhubaneswar	15	11	Khallikot	02
2	Puri	12	12	Talcher Road	04
3	Brahmapur	03	13	Paradeep	02
4	Cuttack	10	14	Khurda Road	12
5	Balugaon	01	15	Angul	01
6	Sompeta	01	16	Daspalla	02
7	Chatrapur	02	17	Nayagarh Town	02
8	Delang	02	18	Kendujhargarh	02
9	Dhenkanal	01	19	Sakhigopal	02
10	Bhadrak	01			

LAST DATE & TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FORM : UPTO 1800 HRS. OF 21.05.2026.

OPENING DATE & TIME OF APPLICATION FORM : UPTO 1100 HRS. OF 22.05.2026.

The application form with detailed terms and conditions can be downloaded from the website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in → tender or can be collected from the office in any working day.

Terms & Conditions : (1) He/She should be retired Railway Employee & General Public. (2) Multiple applications will be treated as invalid. (3) The applicants may submit their application forms duly filled in prescribed format along with requisite documents to the office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road. Application received by post shall not be accepted.

PR-99/R/26-27 Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2026-12, Dtd. 25.04.2026

Name of the work : ALTERATION OF MEDHA EI AT 04 STATIONS (AT JIJUMURA, BALANGIR, SAINTALA & BARGARH) FOR REMOVAL OF LEVEL CROSSING (LC) GATES FROM VDU.

Tender Value : ₹ 1,10,00,000.00. Bid Security : ₹ 2,20,000.00.

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1100 hrs. on 18.05.2026.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Sig. & Telecom Engineer (Tele),
PR-95/R/26-27 Sambalpur

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. MSM-FRTEXAM-SLRA-3-26

Name of the work : FREIGHT RAKE EXAMINATION AND REPAIR OF WAGONS DURING EXAMINATION AT SARLA (SLRA) YARD FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

Approx. cost of the Work : ₹ 5,96,37,738.56, EMD: ₹ 4,48,200.00. Cost of tender document: 11,800.00. Completion period: 24 months.

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1500 hrs. on 15.05.2026.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in

Bidders are requested to go through in details of the tender document before submitting their Bid.

Any information, if required by the tenderer, can be obtained from the office of Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Sambalpur during the working hours on working days till dates as mentioned in tender document.

Asst. Divisional Mechanical Engineer
PR-104/R/26-27 (Frt.), Sambalpur

Chola

CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED

CORPORATE OFFICE : "CHOLA CREST", C54 & 55, Super B-4, Thiru VI Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 03 2, India
Branch Office : 3rd Floor, Sreemaa Construction Building, Naya Chowk, Madhapatna, Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 753010

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Contact No. : Mr. B. HariKrishna, Mob. No.9937490975, Pinaki Dutta, Mob. 9437479421, Suman Kalyan Satapathy, Mob. 07978744193

E-auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagee (s) that the below-described Immovable Properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited the same shall be referred hereinafter as Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited. The Secured Assets will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", and "WHAT EVER THERE IS" basis through E-Auction.

It is hereby informed to the General public that we are going to conduct a public E-Auction through the website <https://bankauctions.in/>.

Sl. No.	Account No. and Name of the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee	1. Date of Demand Notice 2. Demand Notice Amount 3. Total Loan Outstanding 4. Possession Date	Description of the Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	a) Reserve Price (RP) b) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) c) Bid Increment Amt.	a) E-Auction Date and Time b) EMD Submission Last Date c) Inspection Date
1.	Loan A/c. No. : HE01TYQ0000064751 Samir Kumar Parida (Applicant) S/o. Nityananda Parida Jagabpahan, P. S. - Ersama, Jagatsinghpur, Odisha - 754139 M/s. Samir Kumar Parida (Co-Applicant), Khata No. 451/39, Plot No. 1219, Parida Bhawan, Near RI Office Japa, Jagabpahan, Ersama Sub Post Office, Village - Japa, Ersama, Jagatsinghpur, Odisha - 754139 Malati Manjari Parida (Co-Applicant), W/o. Nityananda Parida Titira, P. O. - Titira, VTC - Titira Jagatsinghpur, Odisha - 754110	1. 10.11.2025 2. Rs. 1,15,53,317/- as on 10.11.2025. 3. Rs. 1,23,31,631.00 (Rupees One Core Twenty Three Lakhs Thirty One Thousand Six Hundred Thirty One Only) as on 30.04.2026 together with interest, penal interest, costs and charges thereon till day of actual payment. 4. 03.02.2026 (Symbolic Possession)	All that part and parcel of the property Bearing Khata No. 34, Plot No. 1/181, Area - 44 Decimal, Mouza - Sunadima Kanda, P. S. - Ersama, Kisdam Gharabari, P. S. No. 62, Tahasil - Ersama, Tahasil No. 246, District- Jagatsinghpur, Odisha.	a) Rs. 1,10,20,000.00 b) Rs. 11,02,000.00 c) Rs. 1,00,000.00	a) 12.06.2026 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM (with unlimited extension of 3 Minutes) b) 11.06.2026 (up to 5.30 PM) c) 15.05.2026 and 16.05.2026 (10.00 AM to 1.00 PM)
2.	Loan A/c. No. : HE01CUK00000067444 Sanjeev Kumar Subudhiray S/o. Paban Bihari Subudhiray, Chasapara, Debi Nagar, Choudwar, District - Cuttack, Pin - 754027 Odisha. Sasmita Subudhiray W/o. Sanjeev Kumar Subudhiray, Debi Nagar, Chasapara, Choudwar, District - Cuttack, Pin - 754027 Odisha. Gagun Drug House Kayal Pada, Nayapatna H/o. Santilata Beura, P. S.-Choudwar, District - Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 754027	1. 16.12.2025 2. Rs. 33,88,069.00 as on 16.12.2025 3. Rs. 40,50,222.00 (Rupees Forty Lakhs Fifty Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Two Only) as on 29.04.2026 together with interest, penal interest, costs and charges thereon till day of actual payment. 4. 06.03.2026 (Symbolic Possession)	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing Khata No. 136/491, Plot No. 502/1191, Area Acre 0.040 Decimal, Mouza - Gopalpur, Tahasil - Tangi Choudwar, P. S. - Choudwar, Tahasil No. 55, Kisdam Gharabari, Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 754027.	a) Rs. 41,00,000.00 b) Rs. 4,10,000.00 c) Rs. 50,000.00	a) 13.06.2026 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM (with unlimited extension of 3 Minutes) b) 12.06.2026 (up to 5.30 PM) c) 15.05.2026 and 16.05.2026 (10.00 AM to 1.00 PM)

1. All Interested participants / bidders are requested to visit the website <https://bankauctions.in> & www.cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notices. For details, help, procedure and online training on e-auction, prospective bidders may Contact - Mr. Muhammad Rahees, Mob. No. 8124000030 / 6374845616, Ms. 4 Closure, Rekha, Mob. No. 8142000062, Email : CholaAuction.LAP@chola.murugappa.com.

2. For further details on terms and conditions please visit: <https://bankauctions.in> & www.cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notices to take part in e-auction.

THIS IS ALSO A STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 9(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT RULES 2002)

Date : 01.05.2025
Place : Cuttack

Authorised Officer
Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited



Everything that I have picked up from not just my party colleagues and workers but also from other observers, media and others have always convinced me that we were going to score a comfortable win of above 75 seats. And all the (exit) polls have confirmed the same thing

SHASHI THAROOR | CONGRESS LEADER

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR UGC-NET 2026 EXAM

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has opened the online registration portal for the UGC-NET June 2026 examination, which will be conducted from June 22-30 in a computer-based test (CBT) mode for 85 subjects



of the day uote

The whole world is impressed by Gujarat's development model and is attracted to Gujarat today



BHUPENDRA PATEL | GUJARAT CM

The government's top priority is to ensure that the benefits of development schemes reach the last person through good governance, transparency and accountability



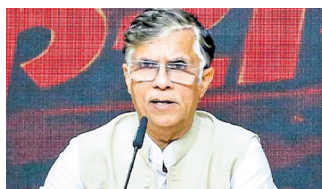
SAMRAT CHOUDHARY | BIHAR CM

The recent chronology relating to this dramatic U turn by the Prime Minister is this: On July 21 2021, the Home Minister had answered a question in the Lok Sabha asked by a BJP MP Smt Raksha Nikhil Khadse (now a Minister herself) and said that the Government of India had decided as a matter of policy not to enumerate caste-wise population



JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS MP

SC reserves order on Khera's plea for anticipatory bail



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The Supreme Court Thursday reserved its order on a plea of Congress leader Pawan Khera seeking anticipatory bail in a case registered against him related to allegations that Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife possessed multiple passports and undisclosed properties abroad.

A bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and AS Chandurkar reserved its decision on the plea after the Congress leader submitted that if he doesn't get anticipatory bail in a registered case against him, then the very purpose of pre-arrest bail is gone.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Khera, said the allegations against him are a matter of trial and it was not necessary to humiliate him by arrest.

He submitted that out of the total sections invoked against him, some are bailable while others don't require his arrest.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Assam government, opposed the plea and said Khera showed fake and doctored copies of passports of the chief minister's wife. He said Khera has been absconding and releasing videos and all the allegations about the chief minister's wife holding multiple citizenships are false.

TMC stages sit-in protest outside EVM strong room

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 30: Tension prevailed at central Kolkata's Khudiram Anushilan Kendra, the counting centre for several north and east Kolkata Assembly constituencies housing EVM strong rooms, after TMC candidates Kunal Ghosh and Shashi Panja staged a sit-in protest outside the premises alleging electoral malpractice and tampering of the vote machines.

The matter came to a head after BJP's Maniktala candidate Tapas Roy, accompanied by Santosh Pathak, his counterpart from Chowranjee, reached the spot and confronted senior police officers on why they allowed the TMC workers to gather and shout slogans at the sensitive venue.

With supporters of both sides shouting "Jai Bangla" slogans and "Jai Shree Ram" counter slogans amid heavy showers in the city, security forces had a tough time preventing the post-poll heat from spiralling out of control. The TMC leaders alleged that Live-streamed footage from CCTV cameras revealed the presence of outsiders inside the strong rooms who were "fiddling with ballot papers" from the machines.

The Election Commission, however, dismissed the claim regarding the handling of polled materials at the centre, stating that poll officials were engaged in the task of segregating postal ballots as per due process and the strongrooms remained secure. "Party workers and supporters were present outside the strongroom till 3.30 pm.



The TMC leaders alleged that Live-streamed footage from CCTV cameras revealed the presence of outsiders inside the strong rooms who were "fiddling with ballot papers" from the machines

The Election Commission, however, dismissed the claim regarding the handling of polled materials at the centre, stating that poll officials were engaged in the task of segregating postal ballots as per due process and the strongrooms remained secure

Suddenly, an email was sent informing that the strongroom would be opened again at 4 pm. We contacted our workers, and they said they had left. We then rushed here. Now we are not being allowed to enter. BJP is being invited," said Ghosh, TMC candidate from Belegkata.

"Ballot papers are being moved inside. Yet the CEO is saying nothing is happening. If postal ballots are being processed, where did they come from? If an email was sent, why weren't we informed?" he

added. The agitating leaders later left the venue claiming poll authorities have assured that security measures at the venue will be reinforced.

The developments took place a day after the final phase of polls in West Bengal were conducted Wednesday and barely hours after TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee, via a video message, urged party leaders, workers and polling agents to maintain a 24-hour vigil over strongrooms housing EVMs, stating she suspected BJP plans to tamper with the machines before counting began May 4.

In a post on X, the TMC described the "act" as "murder of democracy in broad daylight", accusing the BJP of colluding with the Election Commission to tamper with ballot boxes and EVMs during the ongoing poll process. The TMC further alleged that attempts such as voter intimidation, deletion of names and misuse of central forces had failed, prompting the BJP to resort to "desperate measures" like tampering with EVMs.

Govt reviews households with dual LPG and PNG connections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The government is identifying households with both liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and piped natural gas (PNG) connections as it enforces an order prohibiting dual ownership, aiming to curb misuse and better target subsidies.

The government had last month barred households with piped cooking gas (called PNG) connections from retaining or obtaining subsidised domestic LPG connections. In a notification issued March 14, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas amended the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000, under the Essential Commodities Act, making it mandatory for consumers with PNG connections to surrender their domestic LPG connections.

This was done with a view to accelerating PNG rollout to ease pressure on cooking gas supplies amid global energy supply disruptions. The amended order also prohibits government oil companies and their distributors from providing domestic LPG connections or refilling cylinders for consumers who already have a PNG supply.

"Assessment is being done as to how many have dual connections," said Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, at an inter-ministerial press briefing on developments in West Asia. "The government last month issued an order which said, 'No person having a piped natural gas (PNG) connection and also having a domestic LPG connection shall retain a domestic LPG connection, or take refills of



domestic LPG cylinders from any Government oil company, or through their distributors. Such persons will be required to immediately surrender their domestic LPG connection".

Those having PNG connections have also been barred from obtaining a domestic LPG connection. For government oil companies, the order prohibited them from "providing a domestic LPG connection, and/or supplying domestic LPG cylinder refills to a consumer who already owns a PNG connection".

The move is aimed at prioritising LPG supplies for households that do not have access to piped gas. India imports about 88 per cent of its crude oil, 50 per cent of its natural gas and 60 per cent of its LPG needs.

Before the US-Israel strikes on Iran on February 28 and Tehran's retaliation, more than half of India's crude imports, about 30 per cent of gas and 85-90 per cent of LPG imports came from West Asian countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The conflict has led to a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, the main transit route for Gulf energy supplies. While India has partly offset crude supply disruptions by sourcing oil from countries, including Russia, gas supplies have been curtailed to industrial users and LPG availability to commercial establishments, such as hotels and restaurants, has been reduced.

SHORT TAKES

Dawood's close aide gets NCB custody

Mumbai: A court here Thursday remanded notorious drug trafficker Mohammad Salim Dola, a close aide of fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim, in the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)'s custody till May 8 in a 2023 drugs seizure case. The probe agency told the court that Dola's name emerged as an international drug trafficker associated with Dawood Ibrahim, and he has been identified as the key supplier of a commercial quantity of mephedrone drug seized from south Mumbai in June 2023.

Murder suspect held after encounter

New Delhi: A murder suspect who allegedly uses minors to execute violent crimes was arrested after a brief encounter with police in northwest Delhi's Ashok Vihar area, officials said. The accused, identified as Suraj (26) alias Kake alias Kana, was apprehended near Prembari Pul early Wednesday, they said. He was wanted in a murder case registered a day earlier.

Italian delegation meets ICG officials

New Delhi: Italian delegation, including members of a shipbuilding firm, held discussions with officials of the Indian Coast Guard Thursday to explore ways to advance cooperation in shipbuilding, maritime technology and capability development, officials said.

India, Italy boost defence ties

New Delhi: India and Italy Thursday resolved to develop a defence industrial framework for co-production of military hardware, a move that came as both nations navigate an evolving security landscape, including the ongoing crisis in West Asia.

Criminal shot dead

Dehradun: A wanted criminal was killed in an encounter with police in the Premnagar area here while he and his associates were trying to flee after robbing and shooting at a contractor, police said Thursday. The Premnagar station house officer was injured in the encounter that broke out Wednesday night, they said.

Amit Shah to inaugurate dairy, cooperative projects in Ladakh

AGENCIES

Leh, April 30: In a significant step towards strengthening cooperative-led rural development and boosting the dairy sector in the Union Territory of Ladakh, the Hon'ble Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, will inaugurate a series of key initiatives at a programme to be held at the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Leh May 1. Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Shri Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh and Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Shri Vinal Kumar Saxena will also be present at the occasion.

The event will mark the inauguration and foundation-laying of multiple dairy infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing milk processing capacity, improving cold-chain systems, and expanding market linkages for local dairy farmers. The



programme will also witness the launch of digital and institutional initiatives designed to modernise cooperative dairy operations in the region.

During the programme, the Hon'ble Minister will lay the foundation stone of a 10 TLPD dairy plant at Kargil and inaugurate new dairy processing

units in Leh, including facilities for curd and paneer production. Additionally, a Bulk Milk Cooler system will be launched to strengthen milk storage and transportation infrastructure.

Further reinforcing the vision of digital empowerment in the cooperative sector, an Android-based Automated Milk Collection System (AMCS) application will be launched to streamline procurement processes and ensure transparency in payments to farmers.

The programme will also feature the flagging off of a mobile milk testing laboratory, aimed at ensuring quality assurance and supporting dairy farmers at the grassroots level. A Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between key stakeholders to enhance the marketing of dairy products under prominent brands, thereby improving market access and value realisation for local producers.



Labourers carry bricks at a brick factory, on the eve of Labour Day, also known as May Day, in Patna, Bihar

No Advocates-on-Record Examination in 2026: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The Supreme Court decided Thursday that the Advocates-on-Record Examination shall not be conducted in 2026, keeping in view the overall strength of the AoRs.

An advocate-on-record (AoR) is a specially-qualified lawyer authorised by the Supreme Court to act and plead on behalf of clients in the apex court. Only AoRs can file appearances, petitions or documents in the top court, ensuring procedural compliance and high-level representation.

"The Competent Authority has been pleased to order that keeping in view the overall strength of the AoRs, the Advocates-on-Record Examination shall not be conducted in the year 2026. The schedule and dates of the next examination likely to be held in the year 2027 shall be notified in due course," a notice on the apex court's website said. The total strength of the AoRs as April 13, 2026, is 3,791, according to the latest list.

US returns over 650 antiquities valued at nearly \$14mn to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, April 30: The US has returned 657 antiquities collectively valued at nearly \$14 million to India, saying there is "more work to be done" to return stolen artifacts to the country.

The return was announced by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg Tuesday. The pieces were recovered following several investigations into trafficking networks, including those related to disgraced art dealer Subhash Kapoor and convicted trafficker Nancy Wiener.

The pieces were returned at an event attended by Consul Rajlakshmi Kadam from the Consulate General of India in New York. Consul General of India in New York, Binaya Pradhan, appreciated the sustained cooperation of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, the US Department of Homeland Security, and the law enforcement agencies

whose "continued vigilance," he said, "made the recovery and return of these culturally significant artifacts possible."

The items returned include a two million dollar bronze figure of 'Avalokiteshvara', seated on an inscribed double-lotus base over a lion-flanked throne.

The inscription identifies the craftsman as Dronaditya of Sipur, located near modern-day Raipur in Chhattisgarh. The Avalokiteshvara was one of a large hoard of bronzes discovered near the Lakshmana Temple in 1939 and entered the collection of the Mahant Ghasidas Memorial Museum, Raipur by 1952.

The statue was stolen from the museum and smuggled into the US by 1982, ultimately ending up in a private collection in New York by 2014. The bronze artifact was located and seized from that collection by the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in 2025.

A sandstone figure of a danc-



The return was announced by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg Tuesday



The pieces were recovered following several investigations into trafficking networks, including those related to disgraced art dealer Subhash Kapoor and convicted trafficker Nancy Wiener

ing 'Ganesha', which was looted by one of Kapoor's indicted co-conspirators Ranjeet Kanwar, from a temple in Madhya

Pradesh in 2000. Convicted trafficker Vaman Ghiya then sold and shipped the statue to the New York-based gallery owner

Doris Wiener.

In 2012, after the death of her mother Doris, Nancy Wiener - later convicted for antiquities trafficking - knowingly created false provenance for the 'Ganesha' statue, consigning it to, and selling it at, Christie's New York.

The 'Ganesha' was purchased at the 2012 auction by a private collector who surrendered it to the Manhattan District Attorney's office earlier this year.

Another artifact is a red sandstone figure of a Buddha standing with his right hand raised in 'abhaya mudra', a gesture of protection. The Buddha's feet are broken off below the knees and only fragments of the halo behind his head are visible, damage that likely occurred when the statue was looted from Northern India.

The \$7.5 million-statue was smuggled into New York by Kapoor and was seized by the Antiquities Trafficking Unit from one of his New York storage units.

For more than a decade, the District Attorney's Antiquities Trafficking Unit, along with law enforcement partners at Homeland Security Investigations, have investigated Kapoor and his co-conspirators for the alleged illegal looting, exportation, and sale of artifacts from numerous countries in South and Southeast Asia.

The DA's Office obtained an arrest warrant for Kapoor in 2012. In November 2019, he and seven of his co-defendants were indicted for their conspiracy to traffic stolen antiquities.

The Antiquities Trafficking Unit has now recovered more than 6,200 cultural treasures, including rare books, works of art, and antiquities, valued at more than \$485 million, and returned more than 5,900 of those so far to 36 countries. The ATU has also convicted 18 individuals of cultural property-related crimes, with another 7 alleged traffickers pending extradition.



Education should not be viewed merely as a means to secure employment. Instead, it must inspire students to reflect on their responsibilities towards society and the nation

RAJENDRA VISWANATH ARLEKAR | GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU

HC PROTECTS SUNJAY KAPUR ASSETS ON KIDS' PLEA

The Delhi High Court Thursday directed preservation of the assets of late Sunjay Kapur, ruling that all "suspicious circumstances" raised by the industrialist's children from his marriage with actor Karisma Kapoor have to be completely removed by his third wife, Priya Kapur, before the acceptance of his purported last will



of the day quote

There are two non-negotiable demands that the Congress has - women's reservation be implemented on the existing 543 seats in the Lok Sabha; and secondly, under women's reservation, an OBC quota is provided

NCRB data proves that UP is currently the most unsafe state for women. Whether it is Ghazipur, Pratapgarh, or Fatehpur, justice remains elusive. Instead of catching criminals, the administration is busy filing false cases against SP workers

When there is a good school for education and a proper ground for sports, a child can bring glory to their village, state, and country on the global stage

POST OF THE DAY

Why are 90% government schools, hospitals, banks, offices, police stations... in such a bad state? While the ministers have offices like 5 star luxury hotels?

SHORT TAKES

Govt slashes Voda Idea AGR dues

New Delhi: In a relief to debt-ridden Vodafone Idea, the government has slashed the adjusted gross revenue liability of the telecom company by about 27 per cent to ₹64,046 crore after reassessing statutory dues, and has allowed a five-year moratorium on these payments.

3 kids drown in golf course pond

New Delhi: Three children, including two brothers aged between eight and 11, drowned in a 15-foot-deep pond after scaling the boundary wall of a golf course in Dwarka's Sector 24, police said Thursday.

Parl panel discusses India-Lanka relations

New Delhi: A parliamentary panel Thursday discussed the issues of India-Sri Lanka relations and New Delhi's role in global tech diplomacy and digital governance, with "very constructive, focussed and positive" deliberations taking place on the subjects.

New exit poll: BJP in Bengal, DMK in TN



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: A new exit poll Thursday predicted that the BJP would win big in West Bengal and Assam, while the DMK would return to power in Tamil Nadu.

The Today's Chanakya poll also predicted a tight race in Kerala, forecasting 69 seats for the Congress-led UDF and 64 seats for the ruling LDF with a margin of error of nine seats.

Another exit poll by News18 for West Bengal, predicted a close fight with the BJP getting 143-163 seats and the TMC 127-147 seats. Today's Chanakya forecast 192 seats for the BJP and 100 for the TMC in West Bengal with a margin of error of 11 seats.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, however, asserted that her party would win more than 226 seats and alleged that the exit poll projections were aired at the "instruction of the BJP" to demoralise TMC workers.

In Assam, Today's Chanakya forecast that the BJP would get 102 seats and the Congress 23 with a margin of error of nine seats. The Assam assembly has 126 seats with the magic mark being 64.

Today's Chanakya predicted that the DMK would return to

power in Tamil Nadu but actor-turned-politician Vijay's TVK would have a stunning poll debut, beating AIADMK, to the second spot.

It predicted that the DMK plus would get 125 seats, TVK 63 seats and AIADMK plus 45 seats with a margin of error of 11 seats. The Tamil Nadu has a total of 234 seats with the magic mark being 118.

In Kerala, Today's Chanakya predicted a close contest, forecasting 69 seats (plus/minus nine seats) for the UDF, 64 seats (plus/minus nine seats) for the LDF and 7 seats (plus/minus four) for the BJP.

Several exit polls Wednesday predicted a thumping victory for the BJP in Assam and a clear edge for the party over the ruling TMC in West Bengal, while projecting a return of the DMK government in Tamil Nadu and a comeback by the Congress-led UDF in Kerala after 10 years.

However, some pollsters predicted a big win for the TMC in West Bengal and a hung House in Tamil Nadu with actor-turned politician Vijay's TVK emerging as a spoiler for the DMK.

Almost all forecast a return to power for the AINRC-led NDA government in Pondicherry.

Vaishnav flags off Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, April 30: As the first direct Vande Bharat Express from Jammu chugged into the Kashmir valley Thursday, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav promised to focus on connecting remote areas like Poonch, Rajouri and Uri to the country's rail network.

Following the completion of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL), Vaishnav said detailed project reports (DPRs) have been prepared on projects to connect the Poonch-Rajouri region to the national rail network and to extend the railway line to Uri, a border town in Baramulla district.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Minister of State in the

Prime Minister's Office, Jitendra Singh, were among the dignitaries present at the flagging off ceremony.

The direct train services between Srinagar and Jammu will reduce travel time between the twin capitals of Jammu and Kashmir, and boost tourism, besides providing an all-weather surface transport link.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first direct train service between Katra and Srinagar June 6, 2025. This service has now been extended up to the Jammu Tawi Railway Station.

The work on the ₹43,780-crore rail project, linking Kashmir to the rest of the country, began in the late 1990s, with the first train operating in the Kashmir Valley in October 2008.

The Today's Chanakya poll also predicted a tight race in Kerala, forecasting 69 seats for the Congress-led UDF and 64 seats for the ruling LDF with a margin of error of nine seats

Another exit poll by News18 for West Bengal, predicted a close fight with the BJP getting 143-163 seats and the TMC 127-147 seats

Most exit polls have had a chequered history and have been off the mark on several occasions in the past. Most exit polls do not spell out the methodology they have followed in arriving at their respective conclusions.

Axis My India Thursday decided not to release its exit poll for West Bengal, saying it did not have enough data with many people not divulging their voting preferences.

The counting of votes for five assemblies - West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Kerala and Assam - will be taken up May 4.

Polls were conducted in a single phase in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu. West Bengal saw two-phase polling April 23 and 29.

On April 9, Assam, Kerala and Pondicherry went to polls. Tamil Nadu went to polls April 23. While the BJP is seeking to retain power in Assam and Pondicherry, where it is in an alliance government with All India N R Congress, the Congress is looking to wrest power from its rival in both these places.

In Kerala, the Congress-led UDF is seeking to replace the LDF government that is in power, while in Tamil Nadu, the DMK-led alliance is looking to retain power by thwarting the challenge from AIADMK-BJP and the debutant party - Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam.

The TMC is looking to retain West Bengal and thwart the challenge from the BJP.

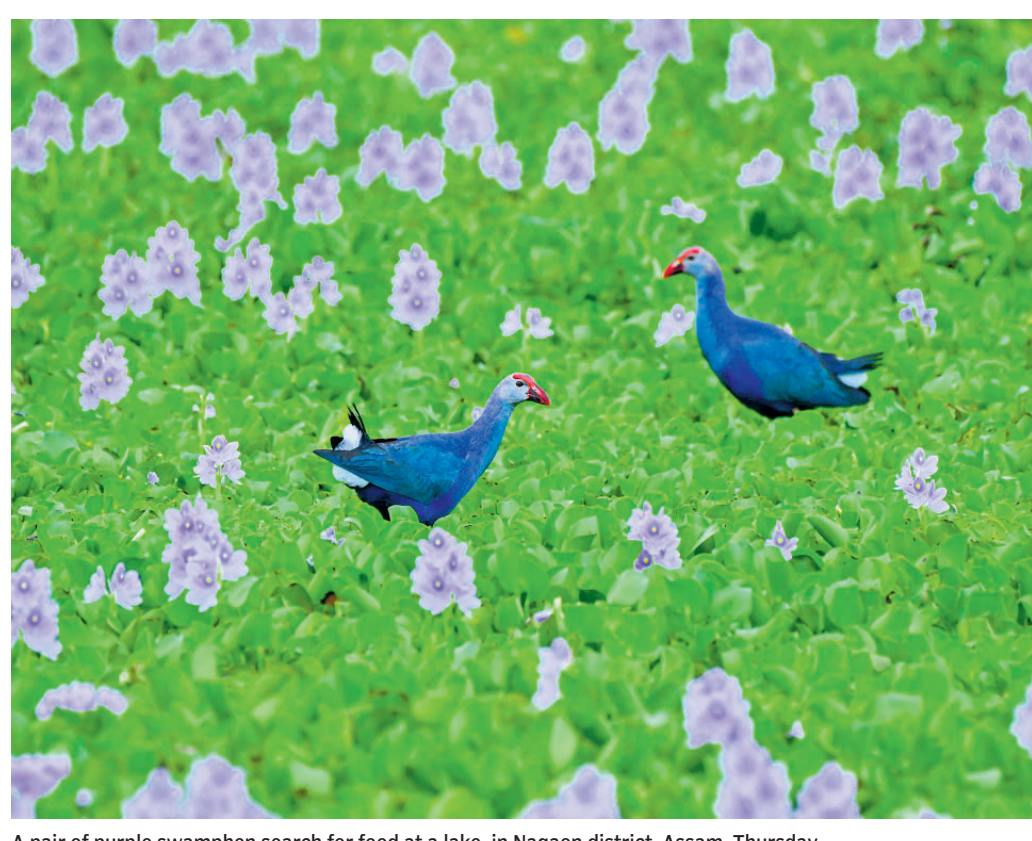
EC introduces I-cards with QR code

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: Seeking to eliminate the possibility of unauthorised persons entering counting centres May 4, the Election Commission has introduced a QR code-based photo identity card system.

While it will become operational May 4 when votes are counted for five assemblies, it will be a standard practice in all future Lok Sabha, Assembly and bye-elections, the poll authority said.

Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Pondicherry went to polls earlier this month for which counting is next week. A three-tier security mechanism has been prescribed for verification of identity at counting centres.



A pair of purple swamphen search for food at a lake, in Nagaon district, Assam, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

4 dead, 10 missing as tourist boat overturns

A total of 29 tickets were issued for the cruise in the Bargi dam reservoir, and among them, four people drowned, while 15 were rescued

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jabalpur, April 30: Four persons died and 15 others were rescued after a river cruise boat carrying 29 passengers overturned in the Bargi dam reservoir after encountering a sudden storm Thursday in Jabalpur district, an official said.

Ten tourists were still missing and an operation was on in full swing to trace and rescue them, he said.

A total of 29 tickets were issued for the cruise in the Bargi dam reservoir, and among them, four people drowned, while 15 were rescued, the official said.

The Bargi Dam has been constructed on the river Narmada in Jabalpur district. A search and rescue operation for the missing passengers was continuing on a war footing. The Jabalpur collector and Superintendent of Police, along with SDRF (State Disaster Response Force) and other rescue teams, are present at the site, the official said.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said the local administration and rescue personnel were continuing their operation after the tragic cruise boat accident in the Bargi dam due to a severe storm.

Public Works Minister Rakesh Singh, Tourism Minister Dharmendra Singh Lodhi, senior divisional, police officials and local people's representatives have been directed to reach the scene of the tragedy to oversee the rescue operation, the CM said in a post on X.

Through a swift operation, 15 citizens were rescued and efforts were underway to locate those who are still missing, said Yadav.

"In this hour of crisis, the state government stands with the affected families with full sensitivity and is ensuring all possible assistance," he maintained.

The news of the cruise boat accident in the Bargi dam is extremely sad and heart-breaking, said Congress MLA and Leader of Opposition in Assembly Umang Singhar.

"Humble tributes to all citizens who lost their lives in this accident, and deepest condolences to the bereaved families," he said.

The Congress leader demanded that the state government immediately provide adequate compensation and all possible assistance to the families of the deceased.

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Mizoram declared 'insurgency-free'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, April 30: The last remaining ethnic insurgent group of Mizoram laid down arms Thursday, and the state became "insurgency-free", Chief Minister Lalduhoma said.

Although it remained dormant for several years, a faction of the Hmar People's Convention (Democratic) or HPC(D), headed by Lalhmingthanga Sanate, indulged in sporadic criminal activities at irregular intervals, officials said.

The Sanate faction was considered the last surviving insurgent group in the north-eastern state.

The HPC(D) had been demanding an autonomous district council for the Hmar community people under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. A total of 43 cadres of the group, including Sanate, surrendered their weapons to the government during a "homecoming" at Sesawng near Aizawl during the day.

The "homecoming ceremony" follows the peace accord signed between the Mizoram government and the HPC(D) April 14, effectively marking the end of insurgency in the state.

Speaking at the event, Lalduhoma said that the shadow of HPC(D) insurgency remained in mind whenever peace was spoken of in Mizoram in the past.

Urging various Mizo tribes to reunite, Lalduhoma emphasised that no single tribe stands above the identity of being Mizo. Stating that the price of peace is high, Lalduhoma, who resigned from the Indian Police Service (IPS) decades ago to mediate peace during the secessionist movement spearheaded by the Mizo National Front (MNF), recalled that he left behind and lost many things so that peace could prevail in the region.

CIC seeks affidavit from ICMR over 'no data' claim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The Central Information Commission (CIC) pulled up the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for claiming that participant-level data on a rotavirus vaccine trial is "not maintained". The ICMR said this in response to an RTI plea seeking statistical details of trial outcomes, including cases of intussusception (a condition where part of the intestine slides into another, causing blockage).

The CIC termed the handling of the RTI plea as "cavalier". It directed the ICMR to conduct a fresh search for the records and file an affidavit confirming their non-availability if they are not found.

The case pertains to an RTI application filed by RTI activist

Amrita Johri seeking details of a clinical trial of the 116E strain of rotavirus conducted with government funding and registered with the Clinical Trial Registry of India.

The applicant had sought data on the number of children who received the vaccine and placebo in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, and on cases of intussusception recorded during the two-year study period.

During the hearing, Information Commissioner Jaya Varma Sinha noted that neither the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) nor the First Appellate Authority had furnished a reply within the stipulated time under the RTI Act.

"The Commission, after advertising to the facts and circumstances of the case, hearing both the parties and perusal of the records, observes that no

ROTAVIRUS VACCINE TRIAL DATA



In its written submission, the ICMR said the Clinical Trial Registry-India maintains trial protocols and methodological details but does not hold participant-level data, adding that "the participant's data is not maintained in CTRI and hence the queries are not relevant to CTRI"

reply has been given to the Appellant either by the CPIO or by the First Appellate Authority within the stipulated frame as per the provisions of the RTI Act. Therefore, the Commission expresses displeasure at the conduct of both the CPIO and FAA for treating the instant matter in a cavalier manner," the order said.

However, in its written submission, the ICMR said the Clinical Trial Registry-India (CTRI) maintains trial protocols and methodological details but does not hold participant-level data, adding that "the participant's data is not maintained in CTRI and hence the queries are not relevant to CTRI".

Taking note of the contention, the Commission directed the CPIO to make a thorough effort to trace the relevant records and provide the requested statistical information within three weeks, if available.

"On the contrary, if the relevant record is still not found, the CPIO is directed to submit an appropriate affidavit, on

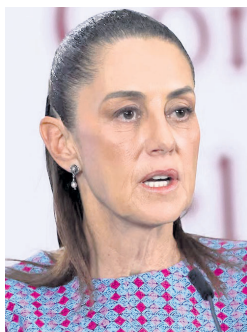
non-judicial stamp paper, depositing the factum of non-availability of the relevant record," the Commission said.

Johri told PTI that she had sought details of the trial results, "especially the incidence of the risk of intestine obstruction," but received no response to her RTI application or first appeal.

She said, "The RTI application was filed more than 18 months ago. The ICMR also claimed that they did not maintain this information. In the hearing, it was pointed out that no personal details of the trial participants have been sought, only statistics regarding the results of the study."

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Rotavirus is the leading cause of severe, dehydrating diarrhoea in children under 5 years old.

international



We are not going to protect anyone who has committed a crime. However, if there isn't clear evidence, it is obvious that the objective of these indictments by the Department of Justice is political

CLAUDIA SHEINBAUM | PRESIDENT, MEXICO

1ST US-VENEZUELA FLIGHT IN 7 YEARS

The first direct commercial flight between the United States and Venezuela departed a bit early Thursday on its way to the capital of the South American country, seven years after the US Homeland Security Department ordered an indefinite suspension, citing security concerns



of the day quote

On the basis of the materials provided by the Ukrainian side within the framework of international legal cooperation, the competent Israeli authorities have begun to process the request

RUSLAN KRAVCHENKO | PROSECUTOR GENERAL OF UKRAINE

The biggest challenge, the biggest adversary we face at this point are the reckless, feckless and defeatist words of congressional Democrats, and some Republicans. Your hatred for President Trump blinds you to the truth of the success of this mission

PETE HEGSETH | DEFENCE SECRETARY, US

By God's help and power, the bright future of the Persian Gulf region will be a future without America, one serving the progress, comfort and prosperity of its people

AYATOLLAH MOJTABA KHAMENEI | SUPREME LEADER, IRAN

SHORT TAKES

Nepal Airlines apologises for J&K map error

Kathmandu: Nepal Airlines Thursday apologised for what it described as cartographic inaccuracies in the wake of a furore showing Jammu and Kashmir as part of Pakistan in a "network map". The airlines had deleted the social media post Wednesday following the backlash. "We sincerely apologise for error in the network map recently shared on our social media channels. The map contained significant cartographic inaccuracies regarding international boundaries that do not reflect the official stance of Nepal or Nepal Airlines," it posted on X.

Paraguay prez to visit Taiwan in May

Buenos Aires: Paraguayan President Santiago Pena will travel to Taiwan from May 7 for a state visit aimed at deepening diplomatic and economic ties, his office and Taiwanese authorities said. His visit comes as China steps up efforts to draw the South American country away from its longstanding support for Taipei. The trip will be Pena's second visit as president to Taiwan, one of only 12 countries that still maintain formal diplomatic relations with the self-governed island claimed by Beijing. Landlocked Paraguay is Taiwan's last diplomatically in South America.

17 killed in Nepal jeep accident

Kathmandu: At least 17 people were killed Thursday when a jeep skidded off a hilly road and plunged about 700 metres into a gorge in Nepal's Rolpa district, police said. The accident occurred in the Jaljala area of Thawang rural municipality when the vehicle slipped on a muddy stretch amid rain and fell down the hillside, they said. The private jeep was hired by locals travelling to attend the Baisakh Purnima festival Friday at Jaljala, according to police inspector Sunil Thapa Nepali, information officer at the District Police Office, Rolpa.

Pak commissions first Hangor-class submarine

Islamabad: The Pakistan Navy Thursday commissioned its first Hangor-class submarine, armed with state-of-the-art weapons and advanced sensors, at a ceremony held in Sanya, China. "The commissioning of the first Hangor-class submarine marks another chapter in the time-tested and enriching friendship between Pakistan and China," the army said in a statement.

RETALIATION THREAT

Iran vows 'painful' hit if US resumes attacks



REUTERS

Washington/Dubai, April 30: Iran said Thursday it would respond with "long and painful strikes" on US positions if Washington renewed attacks, and also reasserted its control over the Strait of Hormuz, complicating US plans for a coalition to reopen the waterway.

Two months into the US-Israeli war with Iran, the vital sea channel remains closed, choking off 20% of the world's oil and gas supplies. That has sent global energy prices surging and heightened concerns about the risks of an economic downturn.

Efforts to resolve the conflict have hit an impasse, with a ceasefire in place since April 8 but Iran still blocking the strait in response to a US naval blockade of Iran's oil exports, the country's economic lifeline. US President Donald Trump is slated to receive a briefing Thursday on plans for a series of fresh military strikes on Iran to compel it to negotiate an end to the conflict, a US official told

- Trump to be briefed on options by US military
US puts pressure on allies to help open Strait of Hormuz
Benchmark oil price touches four-year high

Reuters. Such options have long been part of US planning but the proposed briefing, first reported by news site Axios late Wednesday, spurred big gains in oil prices, with the benchmark Brent crude contract hitting more than \$126 a barrel at one point. It later slipped back to around \$113 a barrel.

Any US attack on Iran, even if limited, will usher in "long and painful strikes" on US regional positions, a senior Revolutionary Guards official said. "We've seen what happened to your regional bases, we will see the same thing happen to your warships," Aerospace Force Commander Majid Mousavi was quoted by Iranian media as saying.

IRAN AIMS TO MAINTAIN ITS HOLD OVER STRAIT

Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei said in a written message to Iranians that Tehran would eliminate "the enemies' abuses of the waterway" under new management of the strait, indicating that the country intended to maintain

its hold over it. "Foreigners who come from thousands of kilometres away... have no place there except at the bottom of its waters," he said.

Iran's parliament speaker and foreign minister also alluded to Iranian control over the strait. Brent prices have doubled since the war began February 28, driving inflation and sending pump prices to politically painful levels worldwide. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that if the disruption caused by the closure dragged on through mid-year, global growth would fall, inflation would rise and tens of millions more people would be pushed into poverty and extreme hunger.

As well as blocking almost all but its own shipping through the strait, Iran launched drones and missiles at Israel and US bases, infrastructure and US-linked companies in Gulf states.

JAPAN SPEAKS TO IRAN ABOUT SAFE PASSAGE THROUGH STRAIT

Mediator Pakistan was trying to avoid escalation while the two sides exchange messages on a potential deal, a Pakistani source said Wednesday. Trump has said Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, while Tehran says its nuclear ambitions are peaceful.

Israel intercepts Gaza aid ships

REUTERS

Athens, April 30: Israel has intercepted aid ships bound for Gaza in international waters near Greece, flotilla organisers said Thursday, decrying the move as an "escalation of Israel's impunity".

The ships make up part of a second Global Sumud flotilla to try in recent months to break an Israeli blockade by carrying humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza. They sailed from the Spanish port of Barcelona April 12.

The vessels were seized by Israel late Wednesday in international waters off Greece's Peloponnese peninsula, which is hundreds of miles from Gaza, the flotilla's organisers said. "This is piracy," the group said in a statement. "This is the unlawful seizure of human beings on the open sea near Crete, an assertion that Israel can operate with total impunity, far beyond its own borders, with no consequences."

No state had the right to claim, police, or occupy inter-



national waters, but Israel had done that, extending its control outward to occupy the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Europe, it added.

Israel's foreign ministry Thursday called the flotilla organisers "professional provocateurs" and said that its forces acted lawfully.

"Due to the large numbers of vessels participating in the flotilla and the risk of escalation, and the need to prevent the breach of a lawful blockade, an early ac-

tion was required in accordance with international law."

Footage released by the organisers showed Israeli soldiers boarding a vessel and crew in life vests with their hands up. Crew members were then taken to Israeli ships.

Greek government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis confirmed that 55 vessels were sailing some 50 nautical miles off the Peloponnese towards Crete, shadowed by Israeli warships and Greek coastguard vessels



Dancers, including a performer in a Labubu costume, perform at Pop Mart's Pop Land theme park on its reopening day following an upgrade, in Beijing, China

Trump assassination accused agrees to stay in custody

REUTERS

Washington, April 30: The man accused of attempting to assassinate President Donald Trump at a black-tie press gala in Washington agreed Thursday to remain in custody while his case moves forward.

The suspect, Cole Allen, 31, would not immediately contest prosecutors' arguments that he was a danger to the community and should remain in jail, his attorney, Tezira Abe, said during a court hearing.

Allen allegedly stormed a security checkpoint and fired a shotgun outside the White House Correspondents' Dinner Saturday. Prosecutors argued Allen carefully planned to attack Trump and other officials in his administration as they dined with some 2,600 journalists, politicians and others in a ballroom at the Washington Hilton hotel.

NYC Mayor Mamdani urges King Charles to return Koh-i-Noor



India has been raising the matter from time to time with the UK government and said it will continue to explore ways and means for obtaining a satisfactory resolution of the matter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, April 30: New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani said he would encourage King Charles III to return the Koh-i-Noor diamond.

"If I was to speak to the King separately from that, I would probably encourage him to return the Koh-i-Noor diamond," Mamdani said at a press conference Wednesday before he met the British monarch in the city later in the day. Mamdani was asked what he would say to the King, who visited New York City on the second day of his State Visit to the US.

Hours later, Mamdani met King Charles at the 9/11 memorial, but it was not confirmed whether he discussed the Koh-i-Noor issue with the British monarch.

King Charles and Queen Camilla visited the 9/11 Memorial to pay their respects to the vic-

tims of the terror attack. King Charles addressed a joint meeting of the US Congress Tuesday, as he and Queen Camilla were honoured at a state dinner hosted by President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump in the White House.

They also visited Harlem Grown, a network of urban farms supporting children and families in Upper Manhattan.

The 105.6-carat Koh-i-Noor diamond was given to Queen Victoria in 1849 by Maharajah Duleep Singh. It was worn by the Queen Mother on her crown in 1937.

India has indicated that it will continue to explore ways to bring back the Koh-i-Noor from the United Kingdom.

The country has been raising the matter from time to time with the UK government and said it will continue to explore ways and means for obtaining a "satisfactory resolution of the matter."

The Koh-i-Noor diamond is currently displayed at the Tower of London. The diamond, set within the Crown of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, has "many previous owners, including Mughal Emperors, Shahs of Iran, Emirs of Afghanistan, and Sikh Maharajas," according to the Historic Royal Palaces charity.

287 nominated for 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, Trump likely among them

REUTERS

Oslo, April 30: Some 287 candidates will be considered for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, the secretary of the Norwegian Nobel Committee said Thursday, with US President Donald Trump likely to be among the nominees.

Of this year's nominations, 208 are individuals and 79 are organisations, said Kristian Berg Harpviken, adding that there were many new nominees compared to last year.

"Since I am new in the job, one of the things that has to some extent surprised me is how much renewal there is from year to year on the list," Harpviken said in an interview. He has held the position since January 2025.

Despite the number of conflicts rising worldwide and international cooperation under pressure, the award remains

relevant, he added.

"The Peace Prize is even more important in a period like the one we're living in," he said. "There is as much good work, if not more, than ever."

TRUMP LIKELY NOMINATED, BUT NOT CONFIRMED

The leaders of Cambodia, Israel and Pakistan have said they nominated Trump for this year's prize. Their nominations, if made, would have been done in spring and summer 2025, and they are therefore valid given the deadline was January 31.

There is no way of verifying they have done as they have said as nominations remain secret for 50 years and Harpviken declined to say Thursday whether Trump had been nominated.

A nomination is not an endorsement by the award body. In addition to committee



IDENTITY OF NOMINEES FOR PEACE PRIZE SECRET FOR 50 YEARS

This year's nominees include 208 individuals, 79 organisations

NORWAY'S NOBEL COMMITTEE WORRIED ABOUT JAILED IRANIAN LAUREATE

SEVERAL LEADERS SAY THEY HAVE NOMINATED TRUMP FOR 2026 PRIZE

members, thousands of people worldwide can propose names: members of governments and

parliaments; current heads of state; university professors of history, social sciences, law

and philosophy; and former Nobel Peace Prize laureates, among others.

Many names appear on betting sites giving odds on this year's possible laureates, from Russia's Yulia Navalnaya, the wife of the late Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, to Pope Leo and Sudan's Emergency Response Rooms, a volunteer aid group, among others.

CONCERN FOR HEALTH OF JAILED IRANIAN LAUREATE

Harpviken said the committee was deeply concerned about the health of the 2023 Peace Prize laureate, Iranian human rights activist Narges Mohammadi, which is worsening after she suffered a heart attack in prison.

Her supporters said Wednesday, opens new tab her life was in imminent danger.

"Her sister was able to visit her in prison yesterday and the

reports coming out after that are actually quite alarming as to her health condition," said Harpviken.

"We see there is a lot of international pressure now. So we hope that the Iranian authorities do pay attention to that and release her so that she can have proper medical treatment."

WHO ELSE COULD BE NOMINATED?

Among possible nominees for this year's prize are Lisa Murkowski, the US senator for Alaska, and Aaja Chemnitz, a member of the Danish parliament elected from Greenland, according to the Norwegian lawmaker who nominated them both.

"Together they have worked relentlessly to build trust and to secure a peaceful development of the Arctic region over many years," said the lawmaker, Lars Haltbrekken.

of the day **note**

India is an important market for us globally and one with tremendous potential in terms of creator talent

ZHEN FANG | VP OF INTERNATIONAL, ROBLOX

Ecuador presents a strong opportunity for us, driven by evolving customer aspirations and increasing demand for reliable, high-quality mobility solutions

SANJAY BHAN | EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT - GLOBAL BUSINESS, HERO MOTOCORP

We continue to expand our ultra-fast delivery service, Amazon Now, which offers delivery in 30 minutes or less on thousands of items. It started last year in India; orders are increasing 25 per cent month over month with Prime members tripling their shopping frequency once they start using it

ANDY JASSY | PRESIDENT AND CEO, AMAZON

Q4 RESULTS

Nalco profit dips 17%

New Delhi: State-run Nalco Thursday reported a 16.6 per cent drop in consolidated net profit to ₹1,722.44 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2026, on the back of lower revenue and higher expenses. The company had posted a consolidated profit of ₹2,067.23 crore in the year-ago period. Revenue declined to ₹5,012.82 crore in the fourth quarter of FY26, compared to ₹5,267.83 crore in the year-ago period, National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco) said in a filing to the stock exchanges. The company's board also approved the third interim dividend of ₹2 per equity share, amounting to ₹367.33 crore for 2025-26.

HUL profit rises 21%

New Delhi: FMCG major Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) Thursday reported 20.96 per cent rise in March quarter consolidated net profit to ₹2,994 crore helped by an increase in volume and proceeds from the divestment of stake in Nutritionalab. The company had logged a net profit of ₹2,475 crore in January-March FY25, according to a regulatory filing from HUL. Revenue from sale of products was up ₹13 per cent at ₹16,172 crore in March quarter FY26 as against ₹16,172 crore a year ago. This was "driven by 6 per cent Underlying Volume Growth," said HUL in its earnings statement.

IDBI Bank profit slips

New Delhi: IDBI Bank Thursday reported a 5 per cent decline in net profit to ₹1,943 crore for the March quarter of FY 2025-26. The LIC-controlled bank had posted a net profit of ₹2,051 crore in the year-ago period. Its net profit was impacted by a fall in operating profit to ₹3,043 crore from ₹3,195 crore a year ago. However, its total income rose to ₹9,409 crore in the period under review from ₹9,035 crore in January-March of the preceding fiscal.

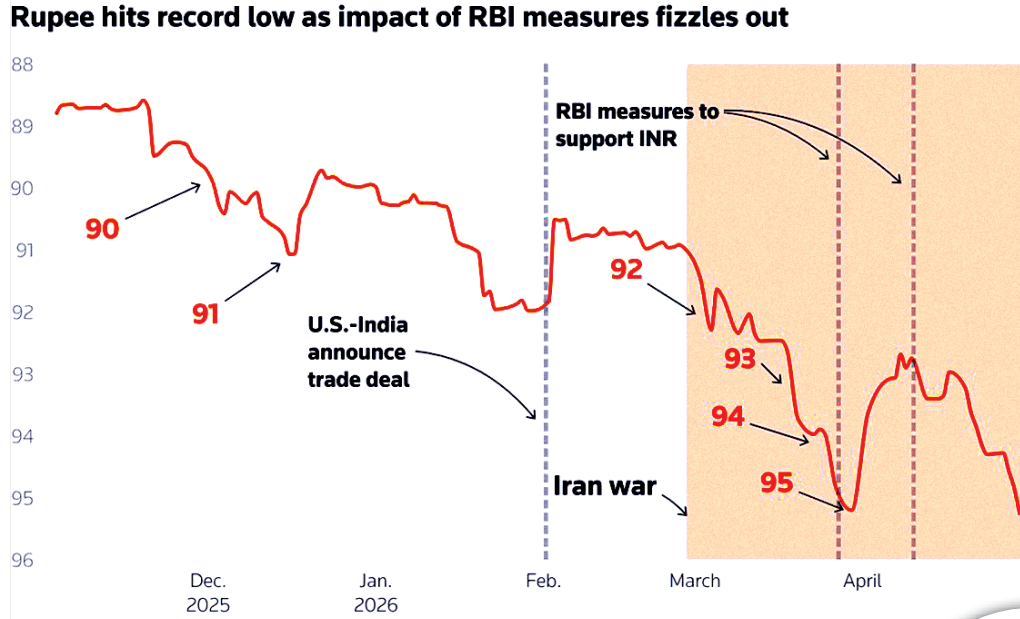
AEL registers loss

New Delhi: Adani Enterprises Ltd, the flagship firm of billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate, slipped into a loss in the fourth quarter, hurt by depreciation of its recently commissioned assets, including Navi Mumbai airport. Loss of ₹221 crore in January-March - the fourth quarter of 2025-26 fiscal year - compared with a profit of ₹3,845 crore, according to a company statement. For the full fiscal (FY26), the company posted a handsome 31 per cent rise in net profit to ₹9,339 crore. Total income grew 20 per cent in Q4 to ₹33,187 crore and by 3 per cent in full FY26 to ₹1.03 lakh crore.

₹ crash puts RBI back on defensive

INDIAN CURRENCY SLIPS PAST 95 AGAINST US DOLLAR AS CRUDE TOPS \$126

Mumbai, April 30: The Indian rupee fell to a record low Thursday, as investors fretted over the economic risks confronting India from a resurgence in crude oil prices to 2022 highs, threatening the inflation-economic growth balance for the net energy importer and sapping capital flows. The currency fell to 95.33 per dollar, down as much as 0.5% on the day, eclipsing its previous all-time low of 95.21 hit in late March. It subsequently pared losses to end at 94.91, only marginally weaker compared to the previous session. Oil-sensitive Asian peers such as the Indonesian rupiah also weakened Thursday, after Brent crude futures climbed to \$126.4 per barrel, the highest in four years, before turning lower on the day in a volatile session. The rupee's fall has wiped out gains spurred by the central bank's use of rare currency-supportive regulatory measures late last month, leaving the currency flat month-on-month even after it rallied to 92.40 earlier in April. The reversal has prompted traders and analysts to suggest that fresh regulatory measures could be on the cards. "If depreciation pressures



Note: Inverted vertical axis for USD/INR
Source: LSEG

persist, the Reserve Bank of India may consider measures to curb oil-related dollar demand from the spot currency market, curtailing imports of gold and tightening monetary policy to support the currency," said Vivek Rajpal, Asia macro strategist at JB Drax Honore. "India's historical patterns also show that higher oil prices often feed into inflation and eventually force the Reserve

Bank of India to respond." **FUNDAMENTAL STRAIN** The rupee has declined nearly over 5% so far in 2026, adding to similar sized drop last year, in a period where India's external sector has faced persistent headwinds ranging from trade frictions with the US to weakness in capital flows and most recently, the most severe energy supply disruption in history.

Persistent weakness in the currency may also drive a negative feedback loop on foreign capital flows by eroding overseas investors' returns while adding to inflationary pressures by lifting import prices, analysts say. Reflecting that anxiety, foreign investors have offloaded

If depreciation pressures persist, the Reserve Bank of India may consider measures to curb oil-related dollar demand from the spot currency market, curtailing imports of gold and tightening monetary policy to support the currency

VIVEK RAJPAL | ASIA MACRO STRATEGIST, JB DRAX HONORE

over \$20 billion of Indian stocks and bonds over March and April so far, nearly double the \$11.8 billion of outflows from the same markets over all of 2025.

"After breaking through the key psychologically important level of USD/INR 95.0, risks of further INR weakness remain, with potential to hit our 2026 year-end forecast of 96.80 sooner than expected," analysts at Barclays said in a note. The rupee came under additional pressure Thursday as a hawkish tilt in the US Federal Reserve's policy decision added to the strain from the rally in oil prices. The US is pushing for other countries to form a coalition to restore the freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

The rupee has declined nearly more than 5% so far in 2026
Brent crude futures climbed to \$126.4/barrel, highest in four years
Analysts reckon RBI could take fresh measures to arrest INR slide

Oil surge triggers bloodbath on D-St

BSE SENSEX	TOP LOSERS	April 30, 2026
-2.85	Eternal	246.80
-2.70	Hindustan Unilever	2250.60
-2.14	Axis Bank	1267.70
-2.13	Tata Steel	211.30
-2.08	UltraTech Cement	11582.80
-2.03	LT	4012.65
-1.97	Trent	4144.30
-1.71	M&M	3096.90
-1.69	SBIN	1068.00
-1.39	BEL	431.55

tumbled 582.86 points or 0.75 per cent to settle at 76,913.50. During the day, it plunged 1,237.5 points, or 1.59 per cent, to 76,258.86, but recovered some of the losses in the second half of the session. The 50-share NSE Nifty dived 180.10 points or 0.74 per cent to end at 23,997.55.

Among the 30-Sensex firms, Eternal, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro, UltraTech Cement and Mahindra & Mahindra were the major laggards. Sun Pharma, Infosys, Bajaj Finance and Adani Ports were among the gainers. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 1.52 per cent lower at \$116.2 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,468.42 crore Wednesday, according to exchange data. "Escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia and Brent crude surging above \$120 triggered concerns around inflation, currency stability, and margin pressures. This was further aggravated by the rupee hitting record lows, accelerating FII outflows and weakening overall sentiment," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said.

Stock and forex markets will remain closed Friday for Maharashtra Day.

Indices fall nearly 1% as high crude oil prices dent investor sentiment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 30: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed nearly 1 per cent lower Thursday as crude oil prices, weak global trends and foreign fund outflows weighed on investor sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex

StanChart to sell bulk of Indian credit cards to Federal Bank

Mumbai: Standard Chartered will sell a portfolio of 450,000 Indian credit cards to Federal Bank, the latter said Thursday, as the London-listed lender shifts focus to wealth business in Asia's third-largest economy. StanChart, which earns most of its revenue in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, had about 640,000 credit cards in India as of March, according to the latest regulatory data. The lender is selling a part of its India portfolio, where customers only hold credit cards and don't have a wider banking relationship, Reuters reported in March. StanChart had been reviewing offers from Federal Bank and peer Kotak Mahindra Bank. The deal with the Kerala-based Federal Bank is expected to close by the end of 2026. The deal value would depend on consent from customers and the balances at the time of transfer, Federal Bank said in a statement, adding that the portfolio is being valued at around 1.5 to 1.6 times implied equity. The bank, which Thursday posted a better-than-expected 17% profit gain, has been selling non-core businesses in India. Last year, Standard Chartered sold its India personal loan business, valued at \$488 million at the time, to Kotak Mahindra Bank.



Renault Group India seeks NCLT nod for restructuring



Mumbai: Renault Group India has sought approval from the National Company Law Tribunal for a proposed restructuring of its India operations, as it sharpens its focus on the world's third-largest car market. Under the proposal, powertrain manufacturing will be housed in a separate entity, while vehicle manufacturing and sales will be integrated into a single entity. Renault India plans to have seven models in the country by 2030 and is targeting exports of about \$2.33 billion a year. The Indian arm of France's Renault said the changes would not disrupt any operations. Automaker aims to have India rank among its top three global markets by 2030 and is targeting about 5% share of the country's car market. All existing manufacturing, supply, and service commitments, continue unchanged, the company said.

AM/NS inaugurates production line



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) Thursday announced inauguration of a production line at Hazira, Gujarat for the manufacturing of advanced high strength steel (AHSS) to meet the growing needs of the automotive industry. The new line will produce high quality, cold-rolled base steel, which will be used to manufacture patented steel solutions from parent companies ArcelorMittal and Nippon

Steel, the company said. The 2 million tonne capacity advanced Pickling Line and Tandem Cold Mill (PLTCM) has been set up as part of ₹60,000 crore expansion project at its flagship plant in Hazira, AM/NS India said in a statement. The new line marks a major step towards making India fully self reliant in the production of AHSS to meet the growing needs of the automotive industry. The line was inaugurated by Keiichi Ono, Ambassador

of Japan to India. The dedicated automotive line will significantly strengthen the company's downstream capabilities, aligning them with global benchmarks. Dilip Oommen, Chief Executive Officer of AMNS India, said: "The inauguration of the Pickling Line and Tandem Cold Mill (PLTCM) will support import substitution, enhance supply chain resilience, and enable the automotive industry's transition towards safer, lighter, and more sustainable mobility solutions."

Hindalco holds mega health camp

Hirakud: Hindalco organised a mega health camp at local community center in Mahammadpur village, Hirakud, Sambalpur Thursday. The camp was organised as per the advice of Sumit Mukherjee, Unit Head Hindalco, Hirakud. The camp was formally inaugurated by Vishwas Sindhia, Head of Human Resources of Hindalco Complex; Pratap Sahu, Smelter Plant Head; Dr Praveen Yadav, Chief Medical Officer; Sukanta Kumar Mohapatra, Advisor of the Peripheral Development Department; and Anand Chakraborty, Department Head. Sindhia, expressed that Hindalco is working towards the improvement of education, health, sports, women, and youth in the Hirakud region, along with the preservation of culture, and this commitment will continue in the future. During the program, Sahu encouraged the attending public to take advantage of this health camp. He further stated that such developmental programs will be accelerated in this region. In this camp, 179 people underwent health check-ups and received necessary medicines. Under the leadership of Dr Yadav, an experienced medical team comprising Dr Padmalaya Mishra, Dr Pooja Srivastava, Dr Himanshu Nayak, Dr Sumit Kumar, and Dr Abhishek Kumar treated various ailments and distributed required medicines to the patients. Anand Chakraborty (Manager, CSR Department), Jayashree Rao, Santosh Tripathi, and Milan Kumar Sahu, along with Hindalco Health Department staff under the leadership of Satya Prakash Panda and project coordinators of The Hans Foundation, Chandra Sekhar and Sourav Nayak, assisted in the management of the camp. The villagers praised Hindalco for this noble initiative and expressed their heartfelt gratitude.



PhonePe scales 700mn users feat

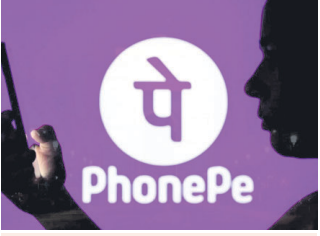
It took PhonePe 136 days to reach its first million users, and now it takes every 6 days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: PhonePe announced that it has crossed the milestone of 700 million (70 crores) life-till-date registered users on its platform as of April 29, 2026.

This milestone highlights PhonePe's population-scale reach in India and the breadth of its digital platform offerings across payments and financial services distribution. It also reflects the company's sustained growth, driven by increasing consumer trust, market-leading distribution network, and a continued focus on building reliable and intuitive digital payment experiences.

What stands out in this journey is not just the scale, but the pace of growth. It took PhonePe 136 days to reach its first million



Crossing 700 million life-till-date registered users is a significant moment in our journey and speaks of the trust that users across the country have placed in us. As we move forward, our focus remains on building products that are simple, secure, and accessible to all, while continuing to contribute to India's digital economy

SAMEER NIGAM | FOUNDER AND CEO, PHONEPE

Govt slashes Vi AGR dues by about 27% to ₹64,046 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: In a relief to debt-ridden Vodafone Idea the government has slashed the adjusted gross revenue liability of the telecom company by about 27 per cent to ₹64,046 crore after reassessing statutory dues, and has allowed a five-year moratorium on these payments.

The Department of Telecom (DoT) had formed a committee to reassess the adjusted gross revenue (AGR), which was fixed at ₹87.695 crore as of December 31, 2025. The final amount, however, was subject to reassessment by the DoT and final approval by the committee.

Vodafone Idea, in an exchange filing Thursday, said: "The DoT has informed that the Committee formed for the purpose has finalised the AGR dues at ₹64,046 crore as on 31 December 2025." The company has to clear final dues in two sets spread over ten years, and the first payment is due after five years. It will need to pay a minimum of ₹100 crore annually over four years from FY 2031-32 to FY 2034-35 and the remaining amount in six equal instalments annually from FY 2035-36 to FY 2040-41, the filing said.

WEAK US DOLLAR

Gold rebounds ₹2K to ₹1.54 lakh/10g

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: Gold prices rebounded by ₹2,000 to ₹1.54 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital Thursday, tracking firm trends in global markets and a weak US dollar.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity jumped ₹2,000, or 1.31 per cent, to ₹1,54,800 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had closed at ₹1,52,800 per 10 grams in the previous session.

However, silver prices declined by ₹1,800, or nearly a 1 per cent, to ₹2,42,700 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from Wednesday's closing level of ₹2,44,500 per kg, as per the association. In the international markets, spot gold gained \$91.80, or 2.02 per cent, to \$4,635.52 per ounce, while silver rose 3.31 per cent to \$73.69 per ounce.

The dollar index slipped 0.27 per cent to 98.69 in the futures market, making bullion more attractive for holders of other currencies.

SNIPSETS

GT overpower RCB

Gill's 43 sets up easy chase as Gujarat Titans beat Royal Challengers Bengaluru by four wickets

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, April 30: Skipper Shubman Gill led from the front and scored 43 runs off just 18 balls as Gujarat Titans (GT) chased down a modest 156-run target in just 15.5 overs while losing six wickets against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in Match 42 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad Thursday.

Chasing a modest target, the Gujarat Titans got off to a flying start, led by their captain, Shubman Gill. He began aggressively, smashing a four and a six off Bhuvneshwar Kumar in the opening over. Gill continued his assault in the next over, taking on Josh Hazlewood with three fours and two sixes, helping GT race to 36 without loss after just two overs.

At the other end, Sai Sudharsan showed intent with a boundary but was dismissed in the same over by Bhuvneshwar, managing only six runs. RCB had a chance to strike again soon after, but Jitesh Sharma dropped a crucial catch to give Jos Buttler a lifeline.

RCB finally found success in the fifth over when Bhuvneshwar dismissed Gill, who was caught by Virat Kohli after a blistering 43 off 18 balls. However, the dropped chance proved costly as Buttler capitalised, striking boundaries and pushing GT to 69/2 at the end of the powerplay.

Buttler's aggressive innings came to an end in the eighth

IPL STANDINGS					
TEAMS	P	W	L	NRR	PTS
PBKs	8	6	1	1.043	13
RCB	9	6	3	1.420	12
SRH	9	6	3	0.832	12
RR	9	6	3	0.617	12
GT	9	5	4	-0.192	10
CSK	8	3	5	-0.121	6
DC	8	3	5	-1.060	6
KKR	8	2	5	-0.751	5
MI	8	2	6	-0.784	4
LSG	8	2	6	-1.106	4



over when Bhuvneshwar clean bowled him for 39 off 19 balls. Despite the setback, GT continued to progress steadily, with Washington Sundar and Shahrulkh Khan guiding the team past the 100-run mark.

RCB fought back again, removing both Sundar and Shahrulkh in the 11th over to keep the contest alive. However, Rahul Tewatia and Jason Holder steadied the innings with a crucial partnership. Although Suyash Sharma dismissed Holder, Tewatia remained unbeaten on 27 and guided GT home comfortably with 25 balls to spare.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar was the standout bowler for Royal Challengers Bengaluru with three wickets, while Romario Shepherd picked up two.

After being put into bat, Royal Challengers Bengaluru got off to a slow start, with Mo-

hammed Siraj conceding just six runs in the opening over. The momentum shifted quickly when Virat Kohli attacked Kagiso Rabada, smashing five consecutive boundaries in a 21-run over.

Despite the strong start, the Gujarat Titans bounced back as Siraj dismissed Jacob Bethell cheaply. Kohli soon followed, mistiming a shot off Rabada and getting caught by Rashid Khan for a quick 28 off 13 balls. Devdutt Padikkal kept the scoring rate high, helping RCB reach 59/2 at the end of the powerplay. However, captain Rajat Patidar fell to Arshad Khan, caught by Jason Holder in a controversial decision that led to protests from RCB players.

The innings quickly unravelled as Holder dismissed Jitesh Sharma, while Rashid removed Tim David. Krunal Pandya also fell cheaply, leaving RCB struggling

at 91/5. Padikkal fought hard with a 40 off 24 balls, but was eventually bowled by Rashid Khan. The lower order failed to recover, with Romario Shepherd scoring 17, while Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Venkatesh Iyer added small contributions.

RCB were eventually bowled out for 155 in 19.2 overs. Arshad Khan starred with three wickets, while Holder and Rashid picked up two each in a dominant bowling display.

Brief scores:
Royal Challengers Bengaluru 155 all out in 19.2 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 40, Kohli 28; Arshad Khan 3-22, Rashid Khan 2-19, Jason Holder 2-29) lost to **Gujarat Titans** 158/6 in 15.5 overs (Shubman Gill 43, Jos Buttler 39; Bhuvneshwar Kumar 3-28, Romario Shepherd 2-30) by four wickets

VAPING INCIDENT

Parag penalised, Royals under lens

The Level 1 offence carries 25 per cent deduction from match fees and one demerit point

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag was Thursday fined 25 per cent of his match fee for bringing the game into "disrepute" after being caught vaping on camera during the IPL game against Punjab Kings in Mullanpur.

Parag's actions during the Royals' chase Tuesday night drew condemnation on social media.

PTI has learned that on field umpires Tanmay Srivastava and Nitin Menon had not reported the matter to match referee Amit Sharma right after the game. They only did that after seeing visual proof and Sharma found Parag guilty for a code of conduct breach as per the IPL guidelines.

The Level 1 offence carries 25 per cent deduction from match fees and one demerit point.

"Riyan admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction imposed by the Match Referee, Amit Sharma," said the IPL in a statement.

"The BCCI is also exploring other options to initiate proceedings for stringent action against the erring team, its officials and players to ensure that the reputation of IPL remains intact," the statement added.

When PTI reached out to BCCI secretary Devajit Saika on possible action on Rajasthan Royals, he said: "As it is written clearly in the statement, we are

exploring what action to take on the team. It is not decided yet."

The Indian government had banned e-cigarettes back in 2019, prohibiting their production, sale and distribution. As per the law, the offender faces imprisonment up to one year and/or a Rs one lakh fine for a first time offence.

Since it is a Level 1 offence there was no need for a hearing. Parag, who has not had the best of times with the bat this IPL, was seen inhaling an e-cigarette, also known as vaping, in the dressing room during the live broadcast of their game against Punjab Kings. Royals won the game to end Kings' unbeaten run in the tournament.

This is not the first controversy to hit the Royals this season. Earlier this month, team manager Romi Bhandari was fined Rs one lakh for breaching PMOA protocol after being found using his phone in the dugout.

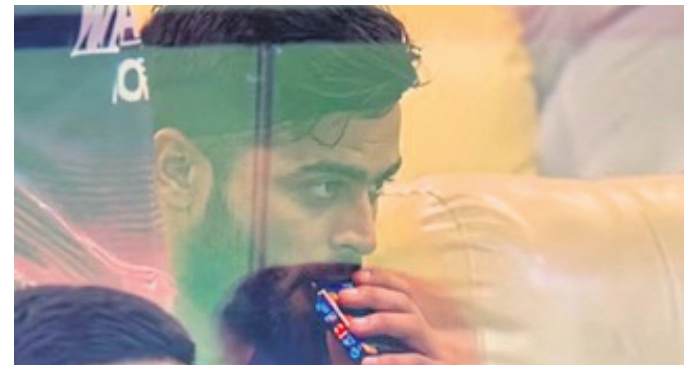
TODAY'S MATCH

RR vs DC

TIME: 7:30 PM

Star Sports channels & JioHotstar

IPL and BCCI officials involved in the conduct of the IPL termed it as a careless act in the age of social media and prying TV cameras.



SHORT TAKES

Thomas Cup Finals: Tough test for India

Horsens: India will aim to stay on course for a second title when they face a formidable Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinals of the Thomas Cup Finals here Friday. Four years ago, India achieved an unprecedented feat by clinching the Thomas Cup crown -- the world team championship of badminton -- bringing the sport firmly into focus among the country's youth. This time, India progressed to the quarterfinals after finishing second in Group A and will face Chinese Taipei, who are yet to win the title. India made a strong start to their campaign with a 4-1 win over Canada, followed by a 5-0 sweep of Australia, before going down 2-3 to China despite a spirited effort.

Thigh injury: Hakimi to miss semifinal

Paris: Paris Saint-Germain defender Achraf Hakimi will miss the return leg of the Champions League semifinal against Bayern Munich because of a right thigh injury, the French club said. The Moroccan right back sustained the injury during PSG's thrilling 5-4 win over Bayern in the first leg Tuesday. He will be out of action for several weeks. The second leg of the semifinal is next Wednesday in Munich. It's the second time this season that Hakimi has been injured against Bayern. He missed several weeks after damaging his left ankle during a 2-1 loss to Bayern in the Champions League group stage in November.

Andrada handed 12-match suspension

Madrid: Zaragoza's Argentine goalkeeper Esteban Andrada was given a 12-match suspension for punching an opponent in a second-division soccer game in Spain this weekend. Andrada was also suspended for one more match for a red card he was shown before the punch. The game was in its final minutes when Andrada shoved Huesca defender Jorge Pulido to the ground when he approached the Argentine goalkeeper. After the referee showed Andrada a second yellow card for the shove, the goalkeeper ran after Pulido and hit him in the face with a powerful right-hand punch. Pulido dropped to the ground and a brawl between players and staff members from both teams ensued. Andrada later apologized for his actions.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Griezmann leads Atletico in final home game



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, April 30: Antoine Griezmann made the most of his final home match with Atletico Madrid in the Champions League.

Griezmann didn't score despite having a few good opportunities, but he led Atletico's attack along with Julian Alvarez and was named the game's most valuable player following the 1-1 draw with Arsenal in the first leg of the semifinals.

"It's a shame I couldn't find the net," said Griezmann, who is joining MLS club Orlando City this summer. "But it will happen in the second leg for sure. We all put in a great effort." Griezmann's best chance at the Metropolitano stadium was a second-half shot that hit the crossbar. He also came close with a strike from inside the area.

The 35-year-old Griezmann missed a penalty kick in the 2016 Champions League final that Atletico lost to Real Madrid.

"We want to reach the final," Griezmann said. "It's my dream. I've prepared a lot for this match and the one we will have in London, and hopefully we can make it to the final."

The France playmaker said Atletico deserved a better result after improving in the second half at the Metropolitano.

Griezmann is Atletico's all-time leading scorer but his minutes have been managed by coach Diego Simeone this season. He's spent 10 seasons with Atletico. He also played for Real Sociedad and Barcelona.

JUNIOR WOMEN'S ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

West Bengal emerge champions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The opening day of the Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) events at the Junior & Senior Artistic Gymnastics National Championships 2026-27 witnessed impressive performances in the Junior WAG Team Final, setting a strong tone for the competition ahead.

In a highly competitive contest, West Bengal emerged as the champions, securing the gold medal with a commanding score of 172.433, showcasing exceptional consistency and technical excellence across all apparatus.



Maharashtra delivered a strong performance to claim the silver medal with a total score of 160.164, while Tripura secured the bronze medal with a commendable score of 155.166, completing the podium standings.

The Odisha team put up a determined performance, gaining valuable experience and exposure at the national level while competing against some of the

MADRID OPEN

Lucky loser Potapova makes history with semifinal run

REUTERS

Madrid, April 30: Anastasia Potapova turned tennis heartbreak into history by becoming the first lucky loser to reach a WTA 1000 semi-final with her thrilling 6-1 6-7(4) 6-3 victory over Karolina Pliskova at the Madrid Open Wednesday.

The Russian-born Austrian, who lost in qualifying last week, has capitalised on her unexpected main draw entry and stunned former world number one Pliskova in a roller-coaster clash despite squandering three match points.

Potapova's run has included impressive victories over former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko and world number two Elena Rybakina.

Asked if she had thought she would be in the final four after her qualifying loss, the unseeded



Potapova said: "No, I wouldn't, for any money and anything. That's what makes our sport beautiful. I was given a second chance and now I'm here. I'm super happy. There's nothing better that could happen to me in my life at the moment."

REUTERS

Melbourne, April 30: Scattered across the globe after fleeing Taliban rule in Afghanistan, the country's exiled women footballers are daring to dream of uniting on the Olympic stage after being given a path back to international soccer.

Global governing body FIFA approved a rule change Wednesday allowing them to play official international matches, building on the FIFA-backed Afghan Women United team set up last year for players living outside their homeland.

Goalkeeper Fatima Yousufi, now based in Melbourne with many of the exiles, said the players were overwhelmed when they heard the news.

"One hundred percent emotional. Tears of joy -- because we never stopped representing Afghanistan in

FIFA RECOGNITION

Afghan exiles dream of Olympic stage



our hearts," the 24-year-old told Reuters in a video call. "And now the world is finally recognising that. But at the same time ... many girls in Afghanistan still don't have this opportunity, so this moment is also for them."

Prior to the Taliban's takeover, Afghanistan had 25 women

players under contract, most of whom now live in Australia. Afghan Women United is currently undergoing a selection process, with FIFA hosting regional selection camps in England and Australia.

While Afghanistan will not be eligible to qualify for the Women's World Cup in Brazil

India maintain perfect start to World Team Table Tennis

Men's team edge past Slovakia

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, April 30: Indian men staged a spirited comeback to edge past Slovakia 3-2 in a gripping Group 7 encounter at the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships here. With the win, India climbed to the top of the Group 7 standings and strengthened their position ahead of their next tie against Guatemala.

The contest ebbed and flowed before India sealed victory through resilience and composure under pressure.

Slovakia drew first blood as Lubomir Pistej, ranked 149,



used his experience to outmanoeuvre Manush Shah, ranked No. 51, in a five-game opener 11-8, 5-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-6, handing his side an early lead.

The men's and women's teams (against Rwanda) will play their final group matches, scheduled to begin at 10 (IST) Thursday.

Afghan women's team to have full international status
Exiled players dream of playing on game's biggest stages
Women's sport has disappeared in Afghanistan under Taliban rule

next year, they could still compete in qualifiers for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

"Thinking about all those (opportunities) coming up, (those) events will be the greatest thing that could happen for the team," said Yousofi, who plays for South Melbourne FC while studying. "So hopefully we will make that."

Since the Taliban returned to power in 2021, women's sport has effectively disappeared in Afghanistan, while access to education and employment opportunities for women have been severely curtailed.